

INSIDE

Your quality Australian weekly soccer paper for the new millennium

SOCCER

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ANGRY BOUTSIANIS BLASTS GLORY



**Bolton's new
signing
Con Boutsianis**

By Brett Klucznik

Perth Glory midfielder Con Boutsianis has severed ties with the club that he has called home for the past two seasons and on Friday boarded a plane to England to join first division club Bolton Wanderers. It came after a week of controversy which saw the player's future with the W.A. based club take a turn for the worse.

It began when coach Bernd Stange omitted Boutsianis from the line-up for the home clash with Parramatta Power.

The shock move was part of disciplinary action brought against the player. 'Bouts' did not make an agreed Glory training session earlier that week having stayed in the eastern states after the previous week's game against Brisbane Strikers.

Boutsianis was not happy with the decision and opted to take matters into his own hands. He went public with his side of the story via the Perth press and in the process threatened his already cloudy future with the club.

In an exclusive in the *The Sunday Times* Boutsianis aired his grievances in a stunning verbal attack on the club.

Claiming to be sick of being portrayed as the bad guy, the midfielder accused Glory of being down on him since he knocked back a recent move to Europe after asking for a larger slice of the transfer fee.

"They (Glory) tried to flog me to a Norwegian team, but I wasn't going to go for that money and I'm entitled to do that. They're just trying to piss me off and see the end of me," said Boutsianis.

Glory GM Roger Lefort confirmed that Perth had received an offer for Boutsianis from Norway for around \$300,000, but also backed up that the reason it fell through was that the midfielder was after more money

from the deal and the club involved wasn't willing to up its offer.

Boutsianis also said he was being victimised by the club after travelling to Melbourne to attend a family event after the Strikers match then failing to return to Perth in time for a Tuesday morning run at the beach.

"I had my niece's christening in Melbourne and got back on Tuesday afternoon at 12.30 for the four o'clock session," Boutsianis said.

"Bernd didn't tell anyone why he brought the session forward to 8.00am, and because of that I got dropped."

But the official club schedule printed five days earlier - and which is made available to the general public via the club's web site - showed that there were always two sessions scheduled for Tuesday, one at 8.00am and another at 4.00pm.

The midfielder went on to launch a scathing attack on the club.

Boutsianis claimed Glory had verbally offered him a contract worth \$75,000 a season for the next two years, but was unwilling to put it in writing.

"The results over the past two years have shown what I have done for this club. They could not care less about me. I want people to know that they don't give a shit about their players.

"I'm sick to death of explaining my situation to people, and being mistreated and conspired against by some of the board members and administration.

"I have done a lot for this club and this is the gratitude I get."

The following day (Monday), Boutsianis spoke to *The West Australian* and publicly proclaimed that he wanted to see out the final three months of his contract with Glory, but acknowledged that he may have overstepped the mark.

Continued page three

Last eight NSL rounds

We look at the lead-up to the finals

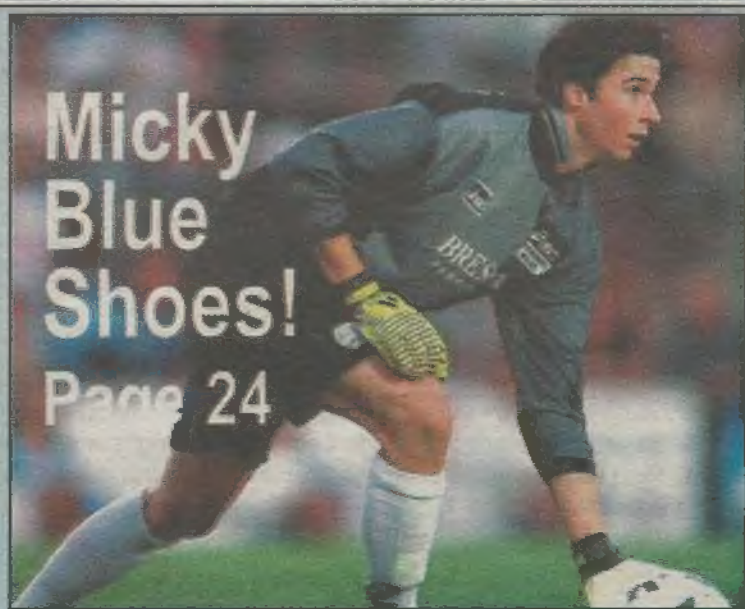
Carlton's campaign

Blakey asks 'can they still make it?'

John Perosh

Why Spirit loaned me to Olympic.

Roger Sleeman asks the questions.



Crooky



What a disappointing way to finally drop out of contention for a place in the Top Six for this season, going down 3-2 to Auckland in New Zealand.

We travelled to Auckland with confidence after disposing of Marconi the previous week and everything went very well for us against the Kingz except for one thing - concentration!

Not for the first time this season, we were defeated by our own silly mistakes in defence.

All three Kingz goals were gifts.

The first was a misjudgment of a lame cross, the second a soft penalty and the third goal, while it was a tremendous strike, was handed to the Kingz by a poor clearance and even poorer marking.

In a way it summed up our season.

What made it even tougher to swallow was the fact that both of our goals came from very good football.

David Seal and Troy Cranney scored goals, set up by fantastic build up and capped off by wonderful strikes. But, it's not how pretty the goals are it is how many you score.

We were also not helped by the late withdrawal of Nicola Berti, who was suffering pretty badly from the effects of a virus.

He contracted the virus on Tuesday and he looked to have beaten it but an hour before the match he was struck down against and he had to pull out of the match.

Adam Griffiths took his place in the

side but after training all week with Nicola it is a l w a y s hard to change so close to the match.

Not making excuses, because it was our defensive errors that cost us the three points.

That result has definitely killed off any chance we had for the top six and we are now resigned to causing grief for the other teams in the running for the top six.

We also have pride to play for after the Melbourne Knights slipped in front of us last weekend to put us in 13th place.

As poorly as we have played this season, I don't think we deserve to be sitting that low and we will be doing everything to make sure we can finish the season with a respectable mid-table finish.

We play Gippsland Falcons on Friday night at North Sydney Oval and we are keen to continue our good home record of recent times that has seen us lose just one of our past seven matches at North Sydney Oval.

The match kicks off at 7.30pm.

Ian Crook
Northern Spirit and England

S-news

Inside Soccer's
Australian news
and gossip

IT'S OFF

As you would well know, the NSL reforms planned for this year have been delayed until the start of next season. The clubs are now in discussions regarding the criteria for being in the league in 2001/2, despite the Soccer 21 document stating it should have been ready by October this year. David Woolley said to ABC news: "Clearly if we couldn't get past first base then ... I can't speak for the board, but I don't think the board would see any value in moving forward if indeed a majority of clubs see so many obstructions, so many issues that can't be resolved." Thank you linesman thank you ball boys, see you next year.

NSL RECORD?

When Andy Vargas slotted home the equalising penalty against Wollongong at Mobil Park this weekend, the Falcons celebrated the club's first home penalty award since Round 1 of season 1995/96. That's right! Falcons last home penalty was scored by Warren Spink in the 59th minute of the game played on 7 October 1995, in fact Spink scored a hat-trick that night in a 4-1 victory, ironically against the Wolves, that took them to the top of the NSL, a spot they occupied for a number of weeks during the early stages of that season. But almost FIVE full seasons between home penalties, surely that must be an NSL record? asks IS's Tom Anderson and Lucio Viggiano.

CROHNS DISEASE AWARENESS WEEK

Is coming up very soon. If you want to know how debilitating this disease is, just ask Parra Power's Peter Bennett, who was diagnosed eight years ago and has to take medication to allow him to play soccer. The disease wrecked what was a very promising career for the former Young Soccerroo, yet despite the odds the tenacious Bennett fought back and ended up playing in a grand final last year with Sydney Utd (where he had the word 'Crohns' shaved into the side of his head.) There is no cure for Crohns, which attacks the bowels making the sufferer extremely tired, among a number of other symptoms. Hopefully some time this century people won't have to go through what Peter Bennett and many other Australians have had to go through. Makes you think.

SOCCEROO SQUAD

The Soccerroo squad for the Czech game will not be announced until the middle of this week. Read next week for our preview of the friendly between Australia and the highly-rated Czech Republic. And the Olyroos' games for the MCG in September are selling like hot cakes. Expect a full house come Olympics time.

SA IN CYBERSPACE

Reports suggest SA will move into establishing financial services on its internet site. There is a 'blue chip' company rumoured to be involved. So if you are a registered player you can avail yourself of services such as super and various forms of insurance. CEO David Woolley also made the prediction that soccer would become the number one football code by 2010 with over a million registered soccer players nationally. Sadly David Woolley rarely returns calls so we couldn't quiz him on these statements.

PERTH JOEYS

Four Perth-based teenagers - Darren Broxton, Anthony Danze, Louis Parkinson and Ryan Fredericks - were included in the preliminary squad of 33 players for Australia's national Under-17's side, writes Brett Klucznik. The squad

recently assembled for a training camp in Parklea (New South Wales) which was run by caretaker coach Les Scheinflug, who lead the Joeys to the runners-up position at last years Under-17's tournament in New Zealand. With a permanent replacement coach being appointed in the next few months, the side are currently gearing up for the 2001 Under-17's qualifiers to be held this December in Samoa. Midfielders Broxton and Danze and forward Parkinson all recently spent two weeks trialling with English Premier League club Southampton. Along with defender Fredericks, the quartet all hail from the Saints Academy which plays at Edith Cowan University's Joondalup campus.

SPIRIT SOFAS

Is the name of the family business of Mr Ilvo de Jesus of Canberra Cosmos. Is that a subtle message to Amie regarding playing in Sydney next year or what! And while we are doing gratuitous plugs for players' businesses, *Buonavoglia on Ramsay* has the finest chocolate calzons this side of Napoli.

U/17S MISS OUT AGAIN

They made the final of the Junior World Cup, and were beaten by a kick by the cocky Brazilians, but that wasn't good enough. The NSW sports awards, held recently in Sydney, nominated the Joeys but they did not take out their category. Mark Byrnes was there, and of course this was 'huge talent' we spoke of last week. Byrnes is off to Bayern Munich for a trial. Another lowlight of this award night was the News Ltd's insistence on only their organisation covering the award. In a similar vein, recently Soccer Australia, in an effort to suck up to Rupert Murdoch (and isn't he a soccer fan), gave exclusivity to News Ltd for a Soccerroo related story.

JOKE OF THE WEEK

Would have to be Adelaide City's President Bob D'Ottavi for saying that since CEO Ned Coten has departed, the club is running better than ever. Better than ever? Then how come the club does not send out press releases anymore, or failed to take advantage of the Damian Mori all-time goalscoring story, and averages 75% empty at the best soccer stadium in Australia by a mile. If this is Adelaide City's idea of running better than ever then surely it's time for new bids to be put on the table in Adelaide. The Zebras board has a lot to answer for and Adelaide, once the home of Aussie Soccer, deserves much much better. And that's not just our view, all the insiders and players involved will agree off the record. Meanwhile City has signed on-loan keeper Adrian Cagall from Carlton to cover for Croatia-bound Vilsen Knezevic.

ARRARTE OFF TO GERMANY

Sydney United's talented midfielder Nahuel Arrarte leaves today for a trial with a German second division club. Also, congratulations to United's Ante Moric, the proud father of newly born Mark. The mid-field general hopes to have young Mark kicking a ball in the very near future. That's the way Ante. And over the back fence at Marconi Eddie Krncevic is reportedly interested in Simon Colosimo, who is due to return to first team footy in the next week or two.

BLOW TO KINGZ

Ricky Van Steeden will be out of action for around six weeks after breaking his arm in training on Wednesday. Van Steeden has established himself as the left centre back in the back three formation the Kingz have adopted over the last several games.

INSIDE SOCCER

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Tana snubs Afkos

By Brett Klucznik

Perth Glory deputy chairman and co-owner Paul Afkos has been voted on to the executive committee of the National Soccer League, without the support of his own club!

"I'm very disappointed that my own club did not support my nomination," Afkos said after the vote.

"On the first occasion, the directors of my club did support my nomination, but Mr Tana (chairman Nick Tana) called a poll to overrule - through his majority shareholding - the directors' decision. On the second occasion, the directors were not given the majority support. I don't believe it deserves a greater comment."

The lack of support for Afkos within Glory ranks highlights the division which has widened between the club's two co-owners.

The rift became public knowledge a month ago when Afkos and Tana split on the issue of whether the club should retain the services of coach Bernd Stange after this season.

Nominated by Marconi Stallions and seconded by Adelaide Force, Afkos topped the Australia-wide poll with 10 votes, four more than Brisbane Strikers chairman Tony Petty, who was

elected to the committee.

With Tana already serving on the seven-member NSL executive, Glory is the only club with two representatives on the committee.

Afkos is highly regarded in soccer administration circles and already has a position with Soccer Australia in his capacity as president of the Soccer Administration of W.A.

He is also a director of amateur body W.A.A.S.S.A. and is chairman of the W.A. referees' council.

"I don't believe there will be a conflict of interest in my new position - after all, we are all aiming at the one goal and that's to enhance soccer in this country," he said.

One area which will undoubtedly see Afkos and Tana clash yet again is the contentious issue of reforming the NSL where both parties sit on opposing sides of the fence.

Tana has made his views clear from the start and is a key player in moves to cut the League club numbers from 16 to 12.

Afkos believes otherwise. "Reforms need to come in helping the less successful clubs to improve sponsorship support, playing standards, facilities and marketing."



Bye bye Boutsianis.

Continued from front page

"Lots of things have been going on but I'm not going to disclose them unless I get feedback from the club first."

"I'll see what they have to say about it then we'll go from there."

Glory denied that it tried to force Boutsianis to move overseas or that they have victimised him. Having not taken disciplinary action

against the midfielder over his outburst, Glory was said to be considering seeking legal advice on how best to deal with the matter.

Boutsianis quickly went into hiding and refused to speak to all media after the article was published.

In addition, he did not attend any Glory training sessions over the days that followed, which only put his position with the club in more doubt.

And Stange demanded an apology from the player before he'd consider recalling him to the team. "It's in Con's hands, I'm waiting for him to say he is sorry over several matters," Stange said.

"I'm a coach for more than 25 years and I know of all excuses from players - grandfather was sick, flight was delayed - but this excuse was new for me."

"Everyone in Perth had my training schedule five days before, but not Boutsianis? Because the players do not have so much money in Australia I don't like to fine them. But the biggest fine is the grandstand."

"That's why I did it. I'm waiting for Con to say 'sorry coach it was the wrong thing what I did.' He lied."

"I did not bring the training session forward. Everybody knows it. I can live with a young man speaking a bit too much, but he shouldn't speak about board members or the general manager. They were not involved in what he did."

With it looking increasingly as though Boutsianis had played his last game in the purple-and-orange, come Wednesday it was rumoured that he was on the verge of leaving Glory in preference for English club Bolton Wanderers in a loan deal. While sources in the UK confirmed Bolton's interest, Glory initially refuted it.

Chairman Nick Tana said he was unaware of any immediate plans Boutsianis might have of joining an overseas club. "I wouldn't have thought that was possible," Tana said. "We haven't given him permission to leave ... he's contracted to us."

But the matter was cleared up the following day when Perth Glory issued a statement confirming they had agreed to release Boutsianis.

He went to Bolton on a loan deal for a fee believed to be in the vicinity of \$100,000, the English club agreeing to pick up his wages. Tana said he had been unaware of Boutsianis' intentions to join Bolton until a meeting held on Wednesday night and played down that the club was seeking to offload the midfielder.

"We don't have any reasons for letting Con go overseas," Tana said. "It was his wish. We owe it to the fans and sponsors to keep the best talent in Perth but if players want to go overseas we are always going to struggle. We, as in Australian soccer, are the losers."

Had Boutsianis stayed in Perth it was likely he'd have faced disciplinary action which may have involved further suspension from the team.

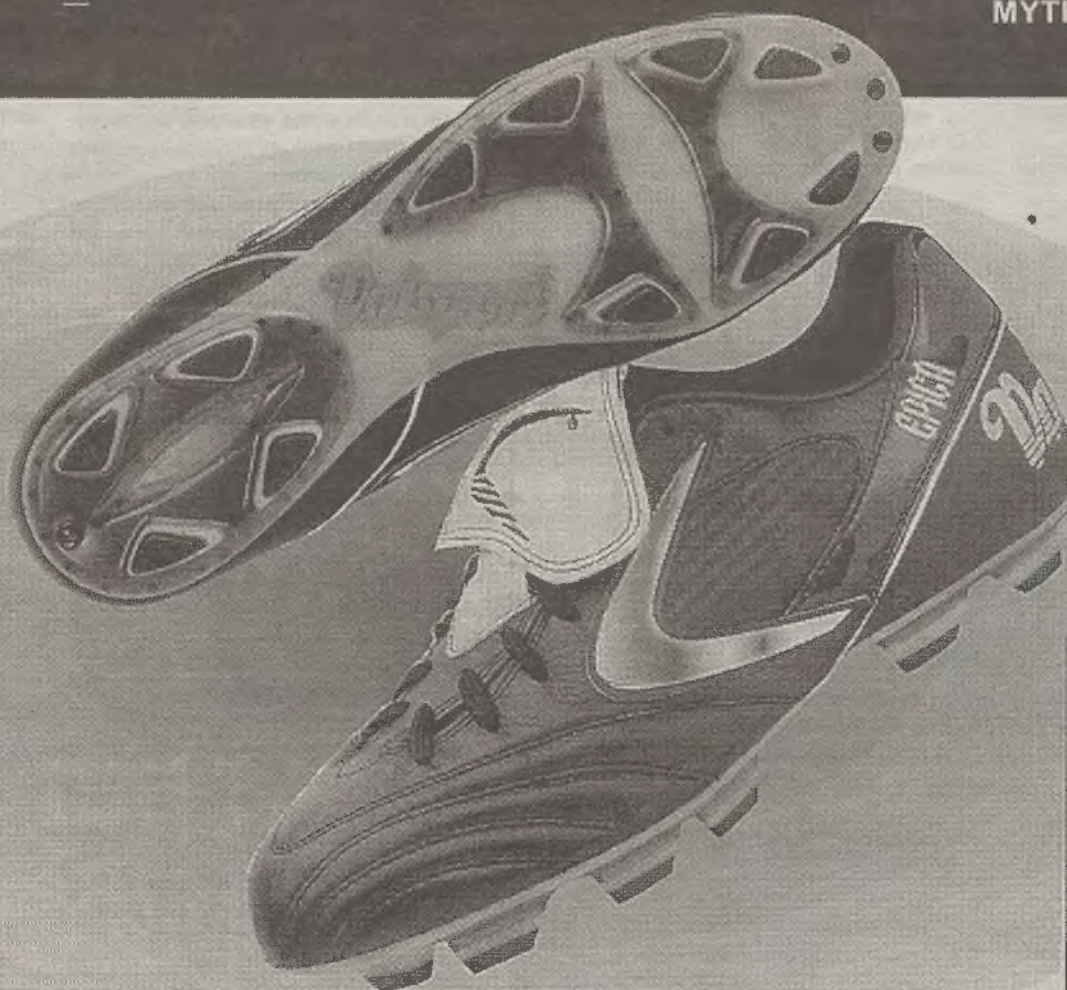
As he departed the club, Boutsianis apologised to Perth Glory, their fans, sponsors, management and coaching staff in an statement issued to the Perth media.

He said he that he had become frustrated and had made some 'regrettable' remarks in the past week or so.

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GREG BLAKE
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What started as a well-intentioned weekly promotional tool a couple of years back has become every bit the must-read giggle of the week in the industry.

When Soccer Australia promotions guru, Rozanna Bozabaljan, kicked into her job a year or two back she took the initiative of issuing a weekly preview of each NSL round, including team info and quotes from the respective representatives of each club, usually the coach.

But what started as a serious attempt

On Melbourne Knights' trip to take on Newcastle two weeks back, Knights skipper, Ante Kovacevic, offered a valuable insight.

"We have to concentrate on winning in order to bounce back from last week's loss."

Well duh!

Perth captain Gareth Naven has obviously had a serious knock on the head recently, apparent when he observed that "we must have a little more salt in the soup" in the lead-up to the clash with Parramatta Power.

What?

More like a little less whacky weed in your down time, young Naven.

And what of poor, delusional Sydney United boss, Ivan Petkovic, who this week was finally forced to concede that "we can safely say that we are out of top six contention now."

Thereby officially ending the confusion of those Sydney United supporters unsure of whether to remain in the queue for finals tickets.

Reminds me of the still poignant coaching theories of former Sweden boss, Tommy Svensson, who, when in Australia on tour with his national team, once remarked that: "If we score and stop the other team from scoring, we stand a good chance of winning."

The face of the game in this Antipodean soccer backwater changed inexorably from that day forth, when this one simple yet telling premise was adopted into the local footballing culture.



Gareth Naven: 'we must have a little more salt in the soup' says Glory's chef de midfield. Also, congratulations on the baby last week.

to toss the general media a line or two on each game has become a bizarre cross between the absurd and the inane.

I reckon the trend was started by current Brisbane John Kosmina coach John Kosmina, who was then coaching the Breakers.

Asked about his team's up-coming road trip to play the Strikers at Suncorp, Kosmina quipped: "I hope we get some good weather."

In recent weeks we've been blessed with some classics.

Last week I mentioned the somewhat confused views of those responsible for voting for this year's Warren Medalist, awarded to the players' player of the year.

Equally as perplexing in season 1999/2000 is evaluating the equation for coach of the year, although the field is somewhat smaller.

As with Warren Medal voting, it sucks big time that votes must be cast long before the finals race is run and won; apparently merely to ensure that all cate-

gory winners are invited and available to attend the end-of-season awards night.

The fact that only one of the past ten NSL championship-winning coaches has actually won the award is a fair indication that the system must somehow be overhauled, although evaluating coaches is particularly tricky.

Should the best coaching record get the nod; or the coach of the team which improves the most; best job on a limited budget; or should it be the title-winning coach?

1996/97 winner, Branko Culina, has claims, having given Olympic fans their first flicker of hope since the club won it all in 1989/90.

There have been some wisened heads through the revolving coaching door at Belmore in the subsequent decade but none have taken the under-achieving club past the first round of the play-offs and Olympic hasn't even seen post season action since 1995/96.

If you asked the Glory faithful Perth boss, Bernd Stange, would be elected prime minister, and he is still the most favored to take his team all the way.

Unfortunately, the system is such that he'll only be judged on having taken what was already a very good team to the play-offs; it was expected of him.

Nick Theodorakopoulos, the current longest serving single-club coach in the comp, has got to be a big show.

His six-gun totin', high-flying Wollongong team is playing a spectacular brand of football - and the Wolves are winning as they haven't done since John Fleming unexpectedly guided the same club to a stunning minor premiership success (and the subsequent inglorious two strikes and you're out finals campaign) in 1988.

While Fleming wasn't coach of the year for that effort, his eventual replacement, David Ratcliffe, did win the award in 1991/92 when he took a previously struggling Wollongong into the second week of the finals.

If that is a litmus test, Nick T has got to have a say this year.

To the best of my knowledge not one pre-season know-all rated the Wolves within spitting distance of the top six, yet Wollongong is almost certain to go deep into the play-offs this year and might yet earn the grand final berth that cruelly eluded the club back in '88.

And then there's Lee Sterrey, whose achievement at Newcastle has been staggering.

An equal club best of 8th on the ladder last year appears certain to be followed up with the Breakers' first-ever finals appearance in 1999/2000, and all achieved with a team remarkably similar to the same one which rarely ranked better than mediocre before Sterrey came on board - and that was before the club lost the likes of Zane, Halpin and Bosnar.

Sterrey supporters say that his contribution towards literally turning the fortunes of an entire club around can probably be registered in statistical terms.

Pre-Sterrey (1991/92 to 1993/94 and 1995/96 through 1997/98) the Breakers played 163 NSL games for a 37-47-79 record



Lee Sterrey: has taken Newcastle to a 23-14-16 record since taking over, improving the win-draw-loss ratio by 20%

all-time @ 32.3%.

In the Sterrey era the Breakers have played 53 games (to the end of round 25 this season) for a 23-14-16 record (@ 52.2%), a measured tangible improvement not bettered by any club during the same period.

And baaaaaring some oversight Kiwi champion, Wynton Rufer, must be considered for merely keeping the Kingz competitive in the finals race in this their first NSL season.

It couldn't not have been a much tougher ask, given the internal turmoil at the Auckland-based club and the pressure from external forces to manoeuvre the Kingz out of the NSL altogether.

As with the 1999/2000 player of the year, it's as open a field as we've probably had in recent years.

How long will it be before clubs seriously consider pulling the pin on key players fronting for national team duties if they continue to be slapped about by what I understand to be current NSL regulations governing players serving suspensions?

Credit Sydney Olympic and Perth Glory for showing some class earlier this season by not having hissy fits about Brett Emerton and Kasey Wehrman respectively, both of whom suffered because of a ruling which dictates that national team duty does not count as timed served when under suspension.

But the issue has surfaced once again with the case of Parramatta Power pivot, Jacob Burns, and the natives are getting decidedly restless.

Burns recently earned a two-week spell for on-field NSL indiscretions, but has trundled off overseas with the Olyroos for a couple of weeks, during the time he would be out of the Power line-up for being naughty anyway.

Luck of the draw?; no way according to the league.

Burns has an enforced rest waiting for him when he returns, meaning his employer, Parramatta Power, loses the kid for four weeks in total.

Given that Burns has apparently already exceeded the maximum number of games that a club is obliged to release a player for national team duty each season, as stipulated by FIFA regulations, Power could have played dirty and kept the kid at home to serve his two weeks and be back for round 28.

That they didn't is a credit to the club.

But the reward should be that Soccer Australia has a long look at this one, because it's only a matter of time before some shit hits the fan.

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The last eight rounds for the NSL contenders

Well, here we are. We're into the final straight of the NSL's home and away and the new faces, and open field, makes it an intriguing last eight rounds for season 99/2000.

Hyperbole aside, below are ten teams in the frame for the top six (apologies to the other sides, we hope you prove us wrong.)

Current leaders Sydney Olympic have a pretty good run home, playing four sides in the bottom six. The Glory game away in round 32 however looms as a blockbuster, and a possible top two decider. Five of Olympic's last eight are at home, including possible wooden spooner, Sydney United on the last day.

The round 33 clash for the exciting Wollongong against Glory also stands out as being critical for the crucial top two fin-

ish.

What may be more important is the crowd. If the Wolves can't pull a 6,000 plus attendance then there really is something awry on the south coast.

Wolves' final four games will be against sides pushing for a six or top two spot, while Glory's final eight home and away clashes feature seven sides in the running for a finals position, including South away.

Newcastle plays six games against contenders for the finals, including rounds 33 and 34 both against South Melbourne. Tough stuff for the Sterrey boys but a spot in the six should be within their reach.

Speaking of South, they have a couple of massive games against hometown rivals Carlton, both at Olympic Park. If there is only one Melbourne side in the

finals (maybe even none?), these two games could well decide how Melbourne is represented.

South has only one side (Sydney Utd) outside the chasing pack for their final home and away matches. It won't be easy, but they have the knack of lifting when needed.

Carlton for its part has both Olympic (away) and Wolves (home) in the last two rounds (33 and 34 respectively). It's going to be hard for Carlton; they also have Breakers away.

Marconi's run home seems reasonably soft, with home games against Spirit (who always lift against the Stallions, but not at Marconi Stadium), Falcons and Force.

The crucial one for them is the round 29 game away to the Kingz.

Power plays Sydney United twice. The enmity between these clubs has clearly subsided but rounds 31 and 32 against Olympic and Wolves is where the real action will be; if Power can win against either of these sides, and beat the Kingz at home on the final day, they may still sneak in, even if they hardly deserve it.

Speaking of the Kingz, their run home looks the best. Force twice, Knights, Cosmos and Gippsland. If they can bag some consistency they will be close to the finals around the time of round 34.

The Strikers too have a relatively safe final eight, although Olympic and Breakers will test them at Suncorp.

SYDNEY OLYMPIC	WOLLONGONG WOLVES	PERTH GLORY	NEWCASTLE BREAKERS	CARLTON
27 Melbourne Knights (H)	Marconi Stallions (H)	Carlton (A)	Canberra Cosmos (H)	Perth Glory (H)
28 Adelaide City Force (A)	Melbourne Knights (A)	Sydney United (H)	Brisbane Strikers (A)	Canberra Cosmos (A)
29 Canberra Cosmos (H)	Adelaide City Force (H)	South Melbourne (A)	Parramatta Power (H)	Sydney United (A)
30 Brisbane Strikers (A)	Canberra Cosmos (A)	Newcastle Breakers (H)	Perth Glory (A)	South Melbourne (H)
31 Parramatta Power (H)	Brisbane Strikers (H)	Marconi Stallions (A)	Carlton (H)	Newcastle Breakers (A)
32 Perth Glory (A)	Parramatta Power (A)	Sydney Olympic (H)	Sydney United (A)	South Melbourne (H)
33 Carlton (H)	Perth Glory (H)	Wollongong Wolves (A)	South Melbourne (H)	Sydney Olympic (A)
34 Sydney United (H)	Carlton (A)	Northern Spirit (H)	South Melbourne (A)	Wollongong Wolves (H)
MARCONI STALLIONS	SOUTH MELBOURNE	BRISBANE STRIKERS	PARRAMATTA POWER	FOOTBALL KINGZ
27 Wollongong Wolves (A)	Brisbane Strikers (H)	South Melbourne (A)	Sydney United (A)	Adelaide City Force (H)
28 Northern Spirit (H)	Parramatta Power (A)	Newcastle Breakers (H)	South Melbourne (H)	Gippsland Falcons (A)
29 Kingz F.C. (A)	Perth Glory (H)	Gippsland Falcons (A)	Newcastle Breakers (A)	Marconi Stallions (H)
30 Gippsland Falcons (H)	Carlton (A)	Sydney Olympic (H)	Sydney United (H)	Melbourne Knights (A)
31 Perth Glory (H)	Sydney United (H)	Wollongong Wolves (A)	Sydney Olympic (A)	Adelaide City Force (H)
32 Melbourne Knights (A)	Carlton (A)	Northern Spirit (H)	Wollongong Wolves (H)	Canberra Cosmos (A)
33 Adelaide City Force (H)	Newcastle Breakers (A)	Kingz F.C. (A)	Northern Spirit (A)	Brisbane Strikers (H)
34 Canberra Cosmos (A)	Newcastle Breakers (H)	Gippsland Falcons (H)	Kingz F.C. (H)	Parramatta Power (A)

*Draw is subject to change by Soccer Australia for television and other reasons. Correct at time of printing. There are also some catch-up games to be played.



EXPERIENCE

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Perosh 'baffled' by Spirit's decision to loan him to Sydney Olympic

By Roger Sleeman

With the introduction of major rule changes during USA '94 there was a new expectation placed on goalkeepers to perform at even higher levels.

However, despite this increased responsibility, goalkeepers are still regarded as the solitary people of football as they rise to fill the top spot, or warm the bench in football stadiums throughout the world.

Cite the experiences of Mark

ular first team football?

JOHN PEROSH All players want to play at the highest level every week but I really didn't mind playing second fiddle to Kalac when you consider most professional squads now have three goalkeepers.

Fortunately, I received a big break when Kalac went overseas before the start of the 1995/96 season and I played all matches during the season.

I didn't see it as a stigma playing as second choice to a keeper as good as Kalac. It's more a case you're not noticed

and would you still like to leave Australia to play in another League?

J.P. Certainly playing in the WYC wouldn't have done my chances any harm but at twenty years of age I wasn't ready as a goalkeeper to venture overseas. Remember, keepers can play a lot longer than field players and you only have to look at the careers of Peter Shilton and Pat Jennings to confirm that.

Significantly, Frank Juric played another three seasons with Melbourne Knights before he ventured overseas and it's only this season he's consolidated a first team spot at Bayer Leverkusen. Vince Matassa is no longer playing so although I was disappointed with my non-selection in 1993, I'm only twenty six years of age and if there was a chance to leave Australia I still have time on my side.

R.S. Supporters of local football clearly remember two incidents in the career of John Perosh during the 1995/96 N.S.L. season.

The first was your clash with Francis Awaritefe when you were covered in blood. The second was the goal you conceded against Damien Mori in world record time.

What are your memories of these incidents?

J.P. In regard to the first incident, I came out to smother the ball but I'm not sure if it was Awaritefe or Velimir Kupresak who collected me. I don't believe there was any malice on Awaritefe's part; it's just the way he's committed to his striking role.

I had ten stitches inserted in my head and although slightly concussed trained on the Monday before the Wednesday match in Adelaide.

Mori's goal caught me unaware as I was standing on the penalty spot and wasn't expecting a shot on goal from the kick off. The ball was hit flat and sweet and it went wide and high to my right. Despite getting a touch, I couldn't prevent it from hitting the right hand corner of the net.

I'm rather philosophical about the goal, although it was embarrassing at the time, because I'm recorded in the history books of world football with Damien Mori.

R.S. You didn't make any appearances in the first team at Northern Spirit last season. How disappointing was this in your first season as a full time professional?

J.P. We had three keepers at the club in Henderson, Blazincic and myself, all competing for the top position. Only one man can get the job each week and as Paul Henderson was performing very well there was no reason for replacing him. Our Top Six placing also justified this decision.

Of course it is disappointing when you're only playing in Youth League every fortnight and you're training at least five days a week, with nothing to show for it.

The continued need for a dedicated approach to your training is the hardest thing to accept when you're not playing but it's all part of a learning phase which many players have to unfortunately experience. A similar scenario could materialise at Olympic if I hold my form and George Bouhoutsos and Jim Kourtis have to warm the bench for the remainder of the season.

R.S. What was the feeling amongst the players at Northern Spirit when Enes and Perinich were in dispute with the club and the P.F.A was brought into proceed-



John Perosh (then of Spirit) flies high over Knights' defender Abbas.

Bosnich at Manchester United this season. The Aussie number one choice has been in and out of the United first team while Alex Ferguson deliberates the future of the number one shirt at Old Trafford.

John Perosh, the Northern Spirit keeper, currently on loan to Sydney Olympic, commanded the number one spot at North Sydney from round three to round 21 and felt at long last he had consolidated a permanent position at the club.

To his dismay he was informed by the Spirit coaching staff before the home match against Brisbane Strikers he wouldn't be playing. Two weeks later he was placed on loan with Olympic for the rest of the season.

In this interview with Roger Sleeman, John Perosh discusses his career in the NSL, his life at Northern Spirit and the mystery behind his sudden departure to Sydney Olympic.

ROGER SLEEMAN Early in your career, you were the constant understudy to Zeljko Kalac at Sydney United. Was there a stigma attached to this and did you ever consider leaving the club to seek reg-

if you don't play regularly in the first team.

During 1996/97 and 1997/98 it was in the back of my mind that I should seek a move because Andrew Crews also was selected ahead of me in 1997/98 after I'd undergone a knee arthroscopy at the start of the season. Perhaps I should've left but you can't change the past.

R.S. You were in the original squad for the 1993 W.Y.C. Do you think if you had played in that series in Australia, the increased exposure would've provided the necessary momentum for your career?

J.P. I was competing against two good keepers in Frank Juric and Vince Matassa at the time. Juric suffered an injury in 1992 and I was selected to tour with the squad. However, when he returned from injury, Juric was in brilliant form and I was the unlucky keeper to miss out as Matassa was the first choice.

Representation at any national level puts you in the spotlight because when you're not there, everybody forgets you and only the players on view receive recognition.

R.S. Would selection in that series enhanced your chance to play overseas,

ings?

J.P. The players are there to play football and if you get involved with affairs outside of playing, it's easy to become sidetracked. After the resolution of the dispute Remo Nogarotto told the players a new club always has teething problems and perhaps if the club had been round longer, the dispute would've been handled differently.

The main thing is both players are back at the club again.

R.S. What is your opinion of the signing of Nicola Berti for the rest of the season and can you see real value in bringing players like him and Peter Beardsley to play in the NSL at the end of their careers?

J.P. By his own admission, Berti has struggled with fitness since arriving in Australia. Maybe we won't see the best of Berti until next season if he does stay in Australia.

As for Beardsley, the crowd of 14,500, which the Knights drew in his first game justified his appearance.

R.S. There have been various reasons given for your transfer on loan to Sydney Olympic. Can you give your account?

J.P. I'm still a bit baffled by the whole experience. Maybe I was secretly blamed for our 4-1 away loss to Newcastle but certainly up to that game I was in top form.

Only two weeks ago I was told by Graham Arnold I was wanted by Olympic for the rest of the season. He informed me if the club's chances to reach the Top Six diminished entirely, Jess Van Stratten would be given a chance to play in the first team.

I realised it would be in my best interests to accept the proposal and go to Olympic.

Despite the many rumours in the press, I didn't leave because of the failure of the club to meet match payments. I was always paid my full entitlements up to my departure to Olympic.

R.S. Will you return to Northern Spirit next season?

J.P. I still have a year of my contract to run at the end of the season so I'm still the property of the club.

I suppose it all depends on how I measure up at Olympic, so ask me again in May.



Carlton 2000

The year of living dangerously

By Greg Blake

Stuart Munro appears cautiously optimistic that his Carlton side has finally turned the corner. There is still some trepidation in his voice; not misplaced given his team's alarming mid-season slump from clear second on the ladder to a rather precarious sixth just a couple of weeks back.

"It's been a frustrating couple of months, but now I think we're out of it a bit," said the first-year Carlton coach before Carlton meekly submitted to Parra Power last Friday, once more putting the pressure back on the Blues.

Carlton won just two of its 13 games into the new year, in a run starting with Newcastle's scoreless result at Olympic Park on December 28 and ending at Canberra, in a re-scheduled Tuesday game to complete 24.

And while the 2-0 win at Cosmos' Bruce Stadium is currently relevant for the tangible reward of three handy points, the result has its own significance for the Carlton players who made the journey to the same ground at around the same time last season.

The scenario 12 months ago was eerily similar; Carlton having spent most of the 98/99 season in the top six before going to Canberra for a round 22 game in seventh-place and well in touch.

On that occasion Canberra, revived under newly-appointed coach Tom Sermanni, cleared away to win 2-0, starting Carlton a crash-dive which ended in eight consecutive defeats, an inglorious

11th place on the ladder and tears all round.

Carlton sucked, Eddie Krncevic walked and questions were asked.

This time around Carlton has shown some ticker, battling back from adversity with a couple of solid - rather than spectacular - wins over Cosmos and Brisbane, although the real tests are still to come.

"I think we were just in a rut, a time when the players just lose their confidence," explained Munro.

"The young boys (bought in to the team when the injury list was claiming the likes of Mark Atkinson and Sean Douglas) did quite well, but when heads go down like it's hard to turn things around.

"It really showed up in Adelaide when we got a penalty and no-one wanted to take it.

"But I think we're getting over that now."

That the club has become a magnet for (adverse) publicity in recent times hasn't helped the cause, with issues concerning financial viability, playing venue, the possible release of the club's much-lauded 'Brit Pack' and pitiful box office figures figuring in a gloomy public mosaic.

But perhaps the stunning resignation of general manager, Lou Sticca - and his final very public volley to a stunned team group - was to many a sign that the whole Carlton dream was turning irrevocably sour.

Sticca branded the players "cheats" in the wake of a 2-1 home loss to Adelaide Force, his pained voice adding. "I can't give any more, so I quit.

"I am blaming every one of you. We are a disgrace," said Sticca, a man long acknowledged as the heartbeat of the experimental club.

"I have had the guts to quit; you guys should have a look at yourselves and some of you might want to quit yourselves."

Far from the moment being a harbinger of impending doom for the club, both Munro and Sticca reflect on it as 'heart-felt' heat-of-the-moment stuff.

"It was just the emotion of the moment," says Sticca.

"As far as the resignation is concerned, it was purely a personal decision.

"And the timing; is there ever a right time?

"I love the club but I quit because I couldn't give any more.

"Do you remember Robert Shannon, one of the first directors of this club?; he died of a heart attack recently at just 48.

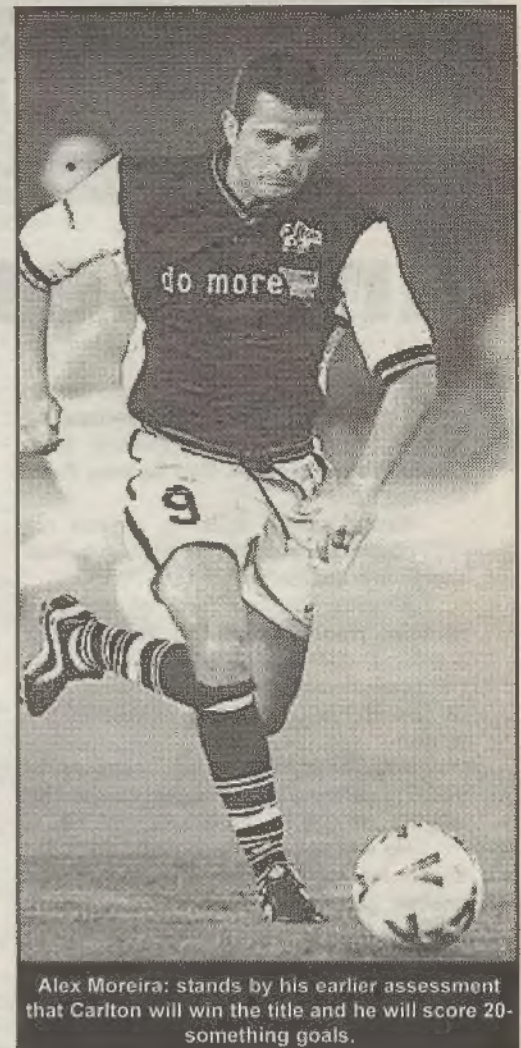
"There is more to my life than Carlton.

"And as far as I'm concerned soccer in this country has real problems and I don't see how clubs can prosper in the current environment.

"If the people who run the sport in this country don't get their house in order clubs are going to die."

As far as Munro is concerned the always passionate Sticca deserved to unload his frustrations.

"Lou got some bad press for that, but he deserved his say," Munro explained.



Alex Moreira: stands by his earlier assessment that Carlton will win the title and he will score 20-something goals.

"I invited him to speak because he's never really got involved like that and I said 'look, you're leaving the club so why don't you say something.'

"He's put more into that club than anyone and, as for me, at the time I thought that sometimes there is nothing more I can say to the players."

Continued on page 26

The Spirit

versus

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LEGSNOR0045-IS

AUSSIES on the world stage

A round-up of how our Aussies players fared abroad this last week ...

Another Kewell week

Harry Kewell continues to dominate the headlines as he spearheaded Leeds' 3-0 home victory over Slavia Prague in UEFA Cup Quarter Final first leg.

Kewell scored again to register his 13th goal for the season - the highest he has scored in a season so far in the Premier.

Kewell's inspired form of late has attracted plenty of attention from the big spending continental Europe clubs but Leeds are determined to retain the services of one of the best young players in the world.

It has been reported that Leeds is prepared to re-negotiate his current contract by offering him over A\$120,000 PER WEEK.

He was at his pulsating best and continued his recent goalscoring habit with another goal in the 83rd minute and was replaced straight after as Leeds recorded an easy 4-1 home win over Wimbledon in the English Premier League weekend action.

In other Premier League action Richard Johnson, rumored to be on the wanted list of Leeds, was in the Watford team that beat Sheffield Wednesday 1-0 but the home victory hasn't helped greatly as they remain in last spot. Playing for Leeds would keep Johnson in the Premier, given Watford's parlous position.

The two Aussie keepers in the Premier League, Mark Bosnich and Mark Schwarzer, both played full games in the weekend action.

Bosnich didn't have much to do as Manchester United beat Leicester 0-2 but still made a couple of mistakes to continue his topsy-turvy season. He was also on goal for United in their mid-week win over Fiorentina in the Champions Cup to secure

its spot in the last eight.

Schwarzer was instrumental in securing Middlesbrough a 1-1 away draw with Sunderland and the Australian pulled off a number of good saves.

In English Nationwide Division One action Stan Lazaridis was back in the Birmingham City starting line-up as they beat Barnsley 3-1. The home victory has put the team in fifth spot, well within striking distance of the teams battling for the automatic promotion second position behind runaway leaders Charlton.

Lazaridis played the full game and went close to scoring in the dying stages of the game.

There was only one Aussie featured in Portsmouth's much needed 1-3 away win over Crewe Alexander. Jason Kearton was in the Crewe goal but Mike Panopoulos was absent from the visiting squad.

Nick Rizzo was a 82nd minute substitute in Crystal Palace's 1-1 home draw with Port Vale but club captain Craig Foster is still out injured.

Two Aussies took part in Wolverhampton's 1-2 away win over Swindon, with Frank Talia keeping goal for the home team and Kevin Muscat scoring a goal for the visitors. Muscat scored after his shot from the edge of the area was deflected off a defender and looped over a stranded Talia, who had a good game otherwise and saved a number of goal bound shots.

George Kulscar made a welcome appearance for Queens Park Rangers in their 1-3 away win over Walsall. Kulscar, who has been out of the QPR squad for a number of weeks, came on as a 65th minute substitute.

Both Andrew McDermott and Jason

Van Blerk were in the starting line-up for West Bromwich Albion as they succumbed 0-1 at home to promotion chasing Huddersfield.

Playing in front of a very healthy 15,384 spectators Van Blerk, who is in line for a spot in the Australian team to face the Czech Republic next week, played the full game but McDermott was substituted at the start of the second half.

In the Sunday game Danny Tiatto played the duration of the game for Manchester City as drew 1-1 at home to leaders Charlton.

In the Nationwide Division Two Millwall had a setback in their quest for a top two spot when they were held to a 1-1 home draw by Blackpool. Tim Cahill and Lucas Neill played full games with Neill receiving a booking in the 11th minute.

Steve Mautone's move to Gillingham has provided him with the same duties he had with Crystal Palace as he remained on the bench in his team's 3-1 home win over Scunthorpe.

In Scotland the big news was the CIS Cup final where Celtic met Aberdeen. Big Mark Viduka was part of the Celtic team that won 2-0 but Viduka didn't get on the score-sheet for a change although he should have done with a couple of one-on-ones with the keeper and he did create the second goal.

In the Premier League Rangers continue on their merry way when they thrashed Motherwell 6-2 with Scottish Player of the Year candidate Craig Moore being substituted in the 76th minute.

Tony Vidmar is still sidelined with his troublesome groin injury.

Stuart Lovell played a full game for Hibernian as they beat Hearts 3-1.

In the German Bundesliga Frank Juric's fairy tale continued as he again kept goals for Bayer Leverkusen in their 1-9 away demolition of David Zdrilic's team, SSV Ulm.

Having got his chance at first team duty because of injury to the first choice 'keeper Juric is going to make very difficult for team management to drop him after five weeks of impressive performance.

Fortunately, for this game at least, Zdrilic wasn't on the field for the slaughter



Our Harry powers his way past Jaap 'The Bull' Stam earlier this season.

as he still recovering from injury (which is expected to keep out of action for at least three months).

Joe Simunic is in a similar position as he attempts to rid himself of his latest injury and he was not part of Hertha Berlin's 1-1 home draw with leaders Bayern Munich.

Ned Zellic was included in 1860 Munchen's starting line-up but Paul Agostino remained on the bench as Munchen beat Werder Bremen 1-0 at home to remain in fourth spot.

Paul Okon was in his usual spot, on the bench, and did not see any action as Fiorentina beat Cagliari 2-0 in a Serie A game on the weekend. He occupied the same position, and again did not take the field, in his team's mid-week loss to Manchester United in the Champions Cup.

In Serie B Vince Grella again played the full game as Ternana drew 2-2 at home to Brescia.

In Holland Zeljko Kalac was in goals as Roda JC played away to RKC with whom they drew 2-2.

In Croatia Ante Milicic was replaced in the 36th minute as his team Rijeka played a 0-0 home draw with Vukovar '91.

Canberra Cosmos' giant keeper Vilson Knezevic is Croatia bound.

MELBOURNE SPORTS BOOKS

New Soccer Books and Videos

Neill Ruddock	\$45
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Michael Owen's Soccer Skills Book	\$25
Ronaldo	\$45
Alex Ferguson: My Life	\$50
Robbie Slater: The Hard Way	\$25
Australian NSL History	\$10
Kevin Keegan: new book	\$17
Michael Owen: two new books	\$25/50
Studs Up Fanzine Jan 2000	\$3
David Beckham: My Story	\$35
Frank Farina: My World Is Round	\$25
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Dennis Wise: new book	\$50
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Jan Molby: new book	\$25
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Manislaughter Utd - A Year With A Prison Football Team	\$30
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Tapai injured

By Scott O'Donell

Alan Vest's Geylang United remains undefeated after two rounds with a resounding 5-2 victory over defending champions Home United in the S-league.

Once again former Gippsland striker Brian Bothwell got on the scoresheet and proved to be handful for the Home defence, which forms the basis of the national team backline.

To add to Home United's injury and suspension woes, Ernie Tapai limped off in the 33rd minute with a hamstring strain, which could see him sidelined for a few weeks.

Darren Stewart could be in for a long season with his young team Balestier Central getting thrashed 5-1 by SAFFC. By all accounts the score could have been a lot more if not for the big Australian in heart of the Balestier defence. Balestier, who have yet to sign

their full quota of foreigners, seem to be really struggling this year and even had to play one of their youth team strikers as their goalkeeper due to an injury to their regular keeper.

Unlike some teams, Balestier have not opted to sign any permanent residents, nor have they signed any recognised local talent, so they could come up against teams who can field up to six or seven foreign players. Not a happy thought for Darren and his co-defenders.

Michael Garcia and Anthony Carbone's Marine Castle fought out a 1-1 draw with Mirko Jurilj's Sembawang Rangers, leaving both teams with two points from two games. In what was an entertaining match played in heavy conditions the result could have gone either way in this game.

Other results: Tanjong Pagar defeated Woodlands 2-1, Jurong beat Clementi 3-1 while Gombak drew 2-2 with Tampines Rovers.

Card update

PLAYERS:	Y	R	Tot
1 Harry James	8	1	9
2 Jamie Harwood	9	0	9
3 Che Bunce	6	2	8
4 Troy Halpin	6	2	8
5 Jacob Burns	7	1	8
6 Goran Lozanovski	7	1	8
7 Nick Meredith	7	1	8
8 Vince Savoca	7	1	8
9 Danny Burt	8	0	8
10 Gabriel Mendez	8	0	8
11 Andy Vargas	8	0	8
12 Walter Ardone	5	2	7
13 Manny Gotis	6	1	7
14 Robert Liparoti	6	1	7
15 Dino Mennillo	6	1	7
16 Mark Silic	6	1	7
17 Jason Vukadin	6	1	7
18 Dean Fak	7	0	7
19 Chris Jackson	7	0	7
20 Darren McDonald	7	0	7
21 Stuart McLaren	7	0	7
22 Claudio Pelosi	7	0	7

CLUBS:			
1 StmM	65	6	71
2 Canb	60	6	66
3 Marc	59	6	65
4 SOly	60	4	64
5 PPwr	56	6	62
6 Kngz	53	6	59
7 MKni	49	7	56
8 WWol	51	4	55
9 SUTd	49	5	54
10 Gpsl	49	3	52
11 PGry	45	6	51
12 BStr	49	2	51
13 AdIC	45	3	48
14 NSpr	37	4	41
15 Carl	32	4	36
16 Newc	34	2	36
TOTAL	793	74	867

	Home	Away	Total
Yellows	355	438	793
Reds	25	49	74
Total	380	487	867

REFEREES:	G	Y	R	Aver
1 Mathew Broeze	26	106	14	4.6
2 Simon Micallef	23	89	5	4.1
3 Con Diomis	22	101	8	5.0
4 Gerry Connolly	22	52	7	2.7
5 Brett Hugo	21	87	10	4.6
6 Eddie Lennie	20	92	4	4.8
7 Mark Shield	20	96	9	5.3
8 Jeremy Blaney	13	30	3	2.5
9 David Dwight	12	43	3	3.8
10 Derek Rugg	7	23	6	4.1
11 Perry Mur	7	12	1	1.9
12 Wayne Dade	6	33	2	5.8
13 Brian Precious	5	25	2	5.4
14 Craig Zetter	1	4	0	4.0

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

"What we did was confusing today. It was fifth division soccer. We played a waiting soccer, we were waiting for rain, or maybe for other things."

Bernd Stange (right) on the Knights loss.

"Hopefully Gareth Naven's wife won't have a second baby next week."

Bernd Stange on his selection conundrum at Glory.

"... we apologise for any incontinence caused"

Inside Soccer's Roy Hay being informed of server problems with his E-mail.

"Robbie Hooker and Glen Kolpak have just invested in a new greyhound and the stupid dog is getting more attention than us."

Cosmos' Ivo de Jesus on the extra-curricular activities of a couple of teammates (see interview page 25)

"People talk about some of these other new clubs but really Perth Glory are miles above the other clubs. It's chalk and cheese really."

Glory's Tony Franken, being, frank.

"Rugby would be better suited to laying carpets rather than reffing footy matches."

One Kiwi wag on the performance level of NZ ref Derek Rugg.

"The best things really do come in small packages. This player is a one-man excitement machine. He has everything: breath-taking speed, skill, poise, balance, flair, intelligence and the biggest heart in Australian soccer. He was a constant threat to Adelaide City for the full ninety minutes."

From our match report on page 11. Here here.

"But like most referees, he's got no idea."

Strikers' John Kosmina

"... he couldn't trap a medicine ball tonight."

Kossie, again, this time on Jeremy Harris' current form.



NSL TOP SCORERS:

MICHAEL CURCIJA 16

(South Melbourne)

PABLO CARDOZO 16

(Sydney Olympic)

CON BOUTSIANIS (PG) 13

DAMIAN MORI (ACF) 12

ALEX MOREIRA (C) 12

STUART YOUNG (WC) 12



Pablo Cardozo

CROWD COMPARISON:

Cumulative to Round 24

99/00: 1,056,846

98/99: 1,040,084

Fixture changes:

*Please note that the Marconi Stallions and Perth Glory game in Sydney will be played on Good Friday April 21 kick-off 6pm (in place of the original Easter Saturday)

NSL match reports and analysis follows on the next eight pages

	(Overall)						(Home)						(Away)					
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GD	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A
W'GONG WOLVES	26	13	8	5	55	36	47	19	9	1	3	29	17	4	7	2	26	19
Sydney Olympic	26	14	5	7	48	30	47	18	7	4	1	30	13	7	1	6	18	17
Perth Glory	25	13	7	5	46	32	46	14	8	3	2	29	19	5	4	3	17	13
Newcastle Breakers	26	12	7	7	36	31	43	5	7	4	2	24	16	5	3	5	12	15
Marconi Stallions	26	12	6	8	37	32	42	5	7	2	4	18	15	5	4	4	19	17
Carlton	26	11	6	9	39	31	39	8	6	4	3	19	12	5	2	6	20	19
Brisbane Strikers	26	10	6	10	34	31	36	3	6	4	3	23	13	4	2	7	11	18
Parramatta Power	25	10	5	10	42	36	35	6	6	4	3	23	15	4	1	7	19	21
South Melbourne	25	10	5	10	40	40	35	0	7	2	3	23	12	3	3	7	17	28
Football Kingz	24	10	5	9	42	43	35	-1	5	3	3	19	18	5	2	6	23	25
Adelaide Force	25	9	7	9	35	28	34	7	7	3	3	26	14	2	4	6	9	14
Melbourne Knights	26	9	6	11	29	43	33	-14	6	2	5	14	14	3	4	6	15	29
Northern Spirit	26	9	3	14	31	45	30	-14	6	2	5	16	19	3	1	9	15	26
Gippsland Falcons	26	6	8	12	17	31	26	-14	3	4	6	10	14	3	4	6	7	17
Canberra Cosmos	26	6	7	13	34	49	25	-15	4	3	6	17	17	2	4	7	17	32
Sydney United	26	3	5	18	15	42	14	-27	3	3	8	12	20	0	2	10	3	22

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Fans warming to in-form Power

PARRAMATTA POWER 2

Sterjovski 46, Townsend 77

CARLTON 0

Friday night at Parramatta Stadium, Sydney. Crowd 3,484.



MATCH STATS:



PARRAMATTA POWER:

M Gibson, M Blagojevic (C), D Barrett, S Eagleton, J Vrkic, S Berry (M Santalab 62), J Gibson, W Ardone, J Griffiths (D Townsend 68), P Bennett, M Sterjovski (A Elrich 78).



CARLTON:

D Anastasiadis, D McPherson, S Horvat, S Douglas, A Marth, M Atkinson, L Lupsansky (M Conroy 90), S Slater, A Thompson, A Moreira (D Terminello 68) A Motsiopoulos (A Packer 81).

Yellows:

Power: John Gibson 23.
Carlton: Mark Atkinson 29, Sean Douglas 55.

Best Players:

3. MILAN BLAGOJEVIC
2. Archie Thompson
1. Steve Eagleton

Referee: Eddie Lennie.

By Paul Goodwin

Parramatta Power returned to a noisy welcome from their home supporters on Friday, after a narrow loss in Perth, to overcome fellow finalists candidates Carlton 2-0.

They won the game without several key players, thus emphasising the strength in depth they clearly possess and they did it against a full Carlton side.

Going into the game without Jacob Burns, Mark Byrnes, skipper Richard Plesa and Socceroo Steve Laybutt meant a return for the stylish Milan Blagojevic, back from injury, and more chances for the other fringe players.

Carlton came looking to consolidate their fifth spot, happy to pick up at least one point if possible and even happier if they could snare two.

The Blues' coach Stuart Munro felt that at half time his side had done enough to go on and win it, as long as they could cut out their turning over of possession and stop making silly mistakes.

Unfortunately, those two thoughts must have still been uppermost in his mind only a minute into the second half, when an intended lay-off by Alex Moreira to team mate Stuart Slater fell well short and had the other player completely wrong-footed, which allowed Power to gain the ball within reach of the penalty area.

Parramatta then went on to take the lead from the move.

Carlton had enjoyed a good share of the first half, with Archie Thompson in his usual free role causing plenty of problems for the home defence, as he repeatedly twisted and turned close to the danger zone.

John Gibson for Parramatta and Thompson were the early playmakers, both making incisive runs, with Gibson

taking the ball through a huge hole in the centre to go on and face the keeper only to drive the ball wide with players in support.

Gibson also ran onto a nice through ball in the 20th only to direct a weak shot against the post. This came after a cross from the right by Griffiths had been dropped by Anastasiadis at the feet of Steve Berry whose shot was blocked by the 'keeper.

Carlton was very much in the game in the first period and almost took the lead in the 26th minute.

Lubo Lapsansky's corner on the right saw the ball reach Moreira whose unmarked header at close range had Power keeper Mike Gibson floundering, but two defenders were on the line and one of them, Steve Eagleton, lifted the ball to safety.

As soon as the second half began Carlton looked more purposeful, but the game took a turn for the worst immediately when the ball was delivered by them into Parramatta hands.

Griffiths made quick progress down the right and cut in, sending a diagonal ball at ankle height to a waiting Sterjovski who swept the ball in with an awkward looking, but nevertheless effective volley.

Two minutes later Blagojevic steered a free kick from around the edge of the area narrowly wide of the post and not long after Peter Bennett did the same.

It took Carlton some time to regroup.

Their most exciting move came in the 56th when Slater on the left got away from his marker to send a ball over for Ange Motsiopoulos to latch onto, but Mike Gibson was quick to get down and smother the attempt on goal.

Steve Berry had to leave the field after sustaining a cheek bone gash which later required seven stitches, after a clash of heads with Moreira an hour into the game.

His replacement Michael Santalab almost got his side's second with a slashing shot from 25 yards which was well taken by Anastasiadis in the 66th.

Thompson, meanwhile, was still causing problems with his speed and trickery and a dangerous cross should have been reached and converted into an equaliser in the 67th by his fellow attackers, but went beyond the far post and away to be cleared by the relieved defence.

With Carlton becoming increasingly exposed as they moved forward in numbers in search of a much needed equaliser, Parramatta's star player Blagojevic capitalised on a Carlton mistake 30 yards out and played an exchange of passes with Sterjovski whose lob was not held by the keeper who made heavy weather of the high catch.

The lightning fast Danny Townsend, another late substitute, was onto the ball in a flash and bundled it over the line for a decisive second goal.

Townsend also got on the end of a nice through pass in the 86th and forced a good save at the foot of the post by Anastasiadis, Blagojevic almost making it three in the 89th with a shot which deflected for a corner when looking goal-bound.

Carlton substitute Andrew Packer

stabbed one just wide on the final whistle, but by then the Carlton challenge had virtually fizzled out.

Their coach Munro was not a happy man, after his side had failed to go on with its recent return to form with an effort he felt was well below par.

"We didn't show enough desire out there", he moaned. "Parramatta were much hungrier than us and a few players did not contribute to the battle. Every game at this stage of the season is a battle."

He felt that only skipper Andrew Marth could hold his head high as 'Stabber' was putting himself about throughout the game.

"He popped up everywhere.

"We couldn't keep the ball in the first half and we discussed that at half time. As soon as we got back out there we gave the ball away. We were never going to win it from there, all we could hope for was a draw, but I thought we still had a chance to do that.

"I didn't expect a big win for us, but I was confident of getting something out of it. We just didn't track their runners the way we should have and that let them in for both goals. Silly mistakes again."

David Mitchell was much happier.

"Far too many people write teams off too early and it was crazy for some to say that our loss in Perth was the end of our chances.

"Considering the players we had out and our lack of height against a big side like Carlton I was very pleased," he explained.

Mitchell was also glad to see a contingent of (Glasgow) Rangers supporters cheering on his side and they would have also been there to see big Carlton defender Dave McPherson and show an interest in what their club's old boys Mitchell and Munro were up to.



Milan Blagojevic: all class from the former Asia-based Socceroo.

It was a planned visit and Mitchell hopes there are more of them.

"They made a lot of noise and they can come back any time," he offered.

"We'll take any supporters, Celtic too," he quipped.

The group had come across from Coogee and Mitchell made a point of saying he hoped they would keep coming back and boosting the growing army of vocal home supporters whose noise levels far outweigh their numbers.

Parramatta are well on target for the play-offs now.

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Buonavoglia dazzles but Zebras Force points

ADELAIDE CITY FORCE 2

Pelosi 79, 90

NEWCASTLE BREAKERS 1

Buonavoglia 32.

Friday night at Hindmarsh Stadium, Adelaide. Crowd 4,191.



MATCH STATS



ADELAIDE CITY FORCE: Knezevic, Tobin, Mori, Veart, Sabljak, Vidmar, Cartwright (Brain 46), Kemp, Costanzo,

Pelosi, Kim (Hassell 59).



NEWCASTLE BREAKERS: Catlin, Pryce, Roberts, McManus, Sprod, Dodd (Owens 65), Wilson, Buonavoglia, Tomich

(Angievski 76), Wieczorek (Trpcovski 74), Moore.

Yellows: Nil

BEST PLAYER:

3. BUONAVOGLIA (NEWCASTLE)

2. Pelosi (Adelaide)

1. Sabljak (Adelaide)

Referee: Perry Mur

Newcastle coach Lee Sterrey expressed anger and disappointment after the match, hinting that some of his players had failed to follow instructions and would not be in the starting line-up next week. Bobby Catlin was furious about a contentious offside decision when Buonavoglia was clean through, and although he didn't say anything, the most disappointed person on the night must have been 88.5 Coast FM Player of the Match John Buonavoglia.

City won the game, but Newcastle's mighty midget won the spectators' hearts. The best things really do come in small packages. This player is a one-man excitement machine. He has everything breathtaking speed, skill, poise, balance, flair, intelligence and the biggest heart in Australian soccer. He was a constant threat to Adelaide City for the full ninety minutes.

When he scored in the 32nd minute, Newcastle looked set to consolidate their place in the finals and dash Adelaide's slim hopes of joining them. Not content with giving Alex Tobin and Angelo Costanzo nightmares, Buonavoglia also gave City's strikers a hard time, making a crucial tackle early in the second half to prevent a certain goal. If the NSL had more players of this calibre, crowd figures would triple overnight.

The game started at a cracking pace. Goalscoring phenomenon Damian Mori went down in the box in the first minute, but Mur turned down his appeal for a penalty.

Boos were still resounding around Hindmarsh when Buonavoglia almost put Newcastle ahead. His shot went wide, but half a minute later he set up ex-City speedster Travis Dodd for a shot from 16 yards. Costanzo, who must surely be on the verge of a call up to the Socceroos, slid across to clear.

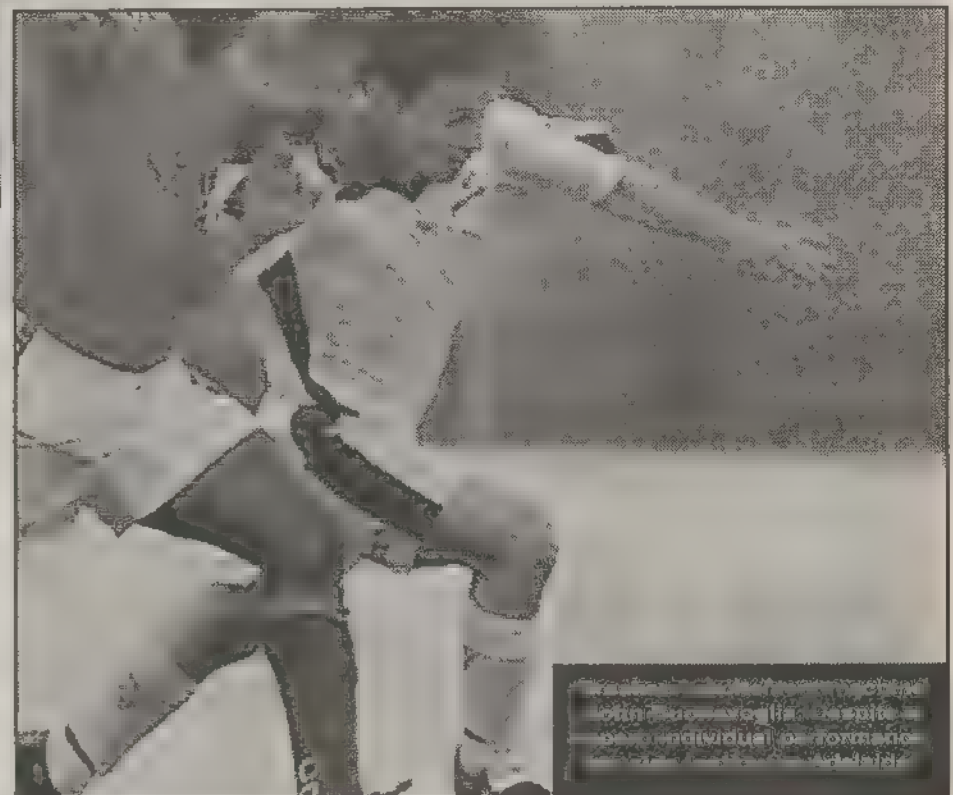
Soon it was City attacking. Pelosi leaped to head in from a corner kick. The ball appeared to go into the roof of the net, but hit the underneath of the crossbar. Mori headed the rebound straight up in the air, veteran keeper Bobby Catlin caught it, and booted Newcastle into attack.

Buonavoglia again threatened to score, but Tobin cleared. It was then Luke Tomich's turn to speed goalward, but again Tobin's long legs came to City's rescue.

Shane Pryce ventured forward for Newcastle and let fly a deceptive, curling long shot just wide of the left hand post, then Tomich missed the sitter of the night.

Mark Wilson sent a long ball forward, catching the City defence square. No offside flag and Tomich was away with only Vilson Knezevic to beat. Tomich shot straight at City's big Croatia-bound keeper, giving him a dream going away present. As if to make amends, Tomich regained possession, and passed the ball wide to Buonavoglia on the left for the Newcastle star to crack a sizzler centimetres past the far post.

Newcastle's relentless pressure must surely pay off. Glenn Moore, Glenn Sprod and Pryce applied the 'sandwich treatment' to Mori, Aurelio Vidmar and Pelosi, while Dodd, Brad Wieczorek, Tomich and Buonavoglia took turns to skin



the City defence, with Andy Roberts firing in long shots.

Against the run of play, Nick Sabljak lobbed a long pass over the Newcastle defence for Mori, who cut inside one defender and rounded another before letting fly from 15 yards, but the ball went over the bar. A minute later Mori sent another chance over the bar, leaping to head a cross from the right from Matthew Kemp.

Buonavoglia decided to show Mori how it should be done. He latched onto the resultant goal kick, sped up the pitch, skipped left, skipped right, rounded Knezevic and coolly slotted the ball into the net from eight yards - magical.

1-0 Newcastle

Dong Ki Kim replied with an awkward shot just wide of the left post, but Newcastle were running hot. Buonavoglia pounced on a loose pass in the midfield and raced past Michael Cartwright. With Costanzo about to tackle, Buonavoglia laid the ball off square to Roberts unmarked on his right, but 'The General' shot wide.

Pelosi decided enough was enough and slammed the ball at Catlin who pulled off a great save. Buonavoglia then roared up the middle of the pitch, held the ball long enough to confuse the defence, then took the most unlikely option and passed it into space on the right where Dodd steamed onto it for a clear shot - over the bar!

A minute later Dodd was in the penalty area again but Sabljak put in a timely tackle to block his shot.

Right on half time Pelosi had a chance to even the score, eluding the Newcastle defence, speeding into the penalty area and drawing Catlin off his line, but his shot skimmed past the left post.

Determined to get the two points, City came out firing from the second half kick-off and Carl Veart cracked a shot against the cross bar in the first minute.

Buonavoglia replied, slamming a long-range piledriver towards the top of the net. Knezevic punched the ball out for a corner.

Vidmar and Veart came into the game more for City, gradually upping the shots at goal statistics in City's

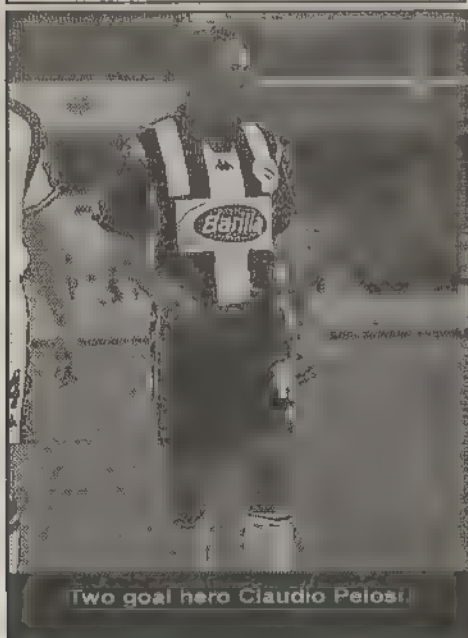
favour, but still unable to put the ball away.

For 20 minutes the game swung end to end, but Newcastle lost its spark when first Dodd, then Wieczorek and Tomich were substituted. Buonavoglia was left as a lone hand up front for Newcastle and City began to look dangerous.

The equaliser came from a corner on the right. Sabljak hit the ball hard and high into the penalty area, Pelosi rose from nowhere, head flicked the ball, and it was in at the near post - 1-1.

City went into overdrive. Costanzo was hobbling but as the game went into time added on, he stole the ball in the mid-field and passed it to Veart who relayed it wide to Sabljak on the right. Sabljak, with a ton of time and space, looked up and slotted the ball across the face of goal for the advancing Pelosi to slide in and score - 2-1 City on the final whistle.

Interestingly, there were no yellow or red cards in this game, nor were there any last time City played Newcastle at home, a rare feat in the current card climate.



Two goal hero Claudio Pelosi

By Margaret Bowden and Donald Campbell

What a contrast to the last meeting between these two teams in Adelaide. In searing conditions, this end-to-end thriller looked destined for a Newcastle win, but Adelaide City's desperation in the final fifteen minutes paid dividends.

It was all too much for their coach Zoran Matic. When Claudio Pelosi glided into the six-yard area to slot another Nick Sabljak cross into the back of the net for the winner 25 seconds into time added on, Matic closed his eyes and slumped back in the dug-out with relief.

City had grabbed another lifeline in its last gasp lunge for a top six berth. Two goals in the last 12 minutes - what a fairy tale finish to a game that loomed for 79 minutes as City's finals' death knell. Had City really won three games in a row? As referee Perry Mur blew the final whistle, several Adelaide players emulated their coach's relief, slumping to the ground.

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Welcome victory boosts Kingz Spirits

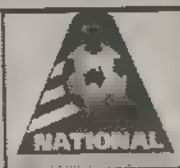
FOOTBALL KINGZ 3

W. Rufer 20, H. Ngata 55, pen, J. Perry 69

NORTHERN SPIRIT 2

D. Seal 43, T. Cranney 62

Friday night at Northern Harbour Stadium, Auckland. Crowd: 3,562



MATCH STATS:



FOOTBALL KINGZ: Utting; Osman, Jones, Vichelich; Perry, Middleby (Hickey, 41), Ngata, Stergiopoulos, Campbell; Rufer (Suri, 79), Lammers (Kenyon, 79).



NORTHERN SPIRIT: Henderson; Rudan, Crook, Bingley; Cranney, Slater; Cunico, Langdon; Seal, Perinich (Catanzaro, 77), Griffiths (Sabczyk, 58).

Yellows

Kingz: M. Stergiopoulos (66)
Spirit: M. Cunico (21)

Best Players:

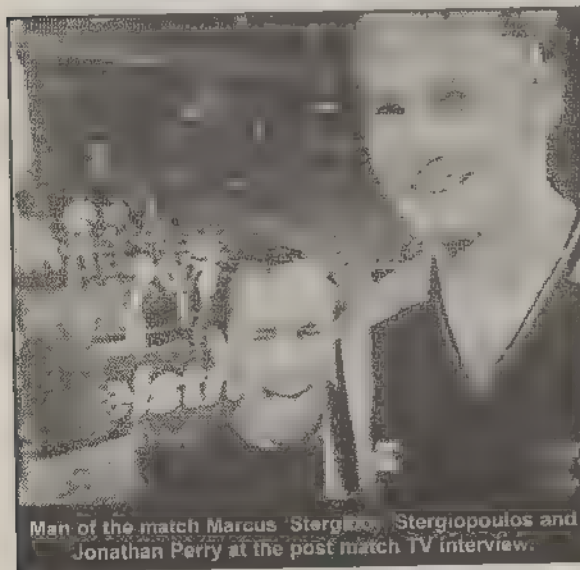
3. M. STERGIOPOULOS (KINGZ)
2. R. Slater (Spirit)
1. H. Ngata (Kingz) 1.

Referee: Simon Micallef

By Jeremy Ruane

In one of the most enjoyable National Soccer Leagues match seen this season, the Football Kingz secured a 3-2 victory over Northern Spirit at North Harbour Stadium on March 17 to keep alive their hopes of making the play-offs in their inaugural season in the competition.

The enterprising quality of football seen in the first fifteen minutes alone set the standard for the remainder of the match. Incredibly, despite the wealth of



Man of the match Marcus Stergiopoulos and Jonathan Perry at the post match TV interview.

precise passing witnessed during this phase, just one chance of note came to pass - Wynton Rufer curling a twenty-yarder narrowly over the crossbar five minutes into play.

Jeff Campbell, making his first start for the home side, was next to go close, his seventeenth minute drive through a crowded penalty area being blocked to safety by Northern Spirit's rearguard, fol-

lowing Lee Jones' teasing free-kick.

Four minutes later, the Kingz took a deserved lead with a strike well worth the admission money. Jonathan Perry broke through from half-way before abruptly changing direction and playing the ball out wide to the Kingz latest recruit, the silky-skilled John Lammers.

He picked out Rufer's rampaging run with a made-to-measure cross towards the edge of the penalty area, which the Kingz player-coach, despite the close attentions of two defenders, expertly killed in his stride with his right foot, before stabbing the ball clinically past the diving figure of Paul Henderson with his left peg to open the scoring, much to the delight of the 3,562-strong crowd.

After Lammers had been thwarted by Henderson's alertness - the goalkeeper had to scamper off his line to clear the danger, as the Dutchman pursued Marcus Stergiopoulos' raking clearance - the visitors began to impose themselves on proceedings, led by Robbie Slater.

Surging forward from deep, Spirit's experienced skipper latched onto Adam Griffiths' lay-off and burst into the penalty area at pace. The Kingz captain, Harry Ngata, had tracked Slater's run, however, and did superbly well to deny the midfielder a clear shot on goal.

Two minutes before the interval, the visitors equalised, and howl Rufer was unable to reach a Lammers cross, Troy Cranney duly gathering possession near his own goal and set

off upfield. He sped away from Rufer, then got the better of Campbell on two occasions, by which time he had thundered into the Kingz half by some fifteen yards.

At this point, he changed the point of attack, picking out Michael Cunico with a fine pass. The midfielder delivered a cross towards the far post which, in all honesty, the Kingz defence should have dealt with. But they failed to, much to David Seal's

delight, the ball falling perfectly for him to unleash a splendid volley into the top left-hand corner of Michael Utting's net - 1-1 at the break.

Ian Crook, Spirit's former England B international, sparked the second half into life within three minutes of the resump-

was on too acute an angle to capitalise on the chance, while Matthew Bingley led the defence in preventing both Lammers and Campbell from finding the target.

As goalscorers go, Perry is far more likely to be found involved in the approach play than in the role of executioner. Come the 69th minute, however, he took on the role of match-winner for the second successive home game with an absolute snorter of a goal!!

As Stergiopoulos surged through the middle with ball at toe, Perry made an inspired run into the inside-right channel, which his team-mate spotted and rewarded with a superbly weighted pass struck with the outside of the right foot. It completely wrong-footed Spirit, who turned to find Perry arriving at pace with the ball dropping tantalisingly in front of him.

Despite having time and space aplenty in which to take a touch and pick his spot, Perry - who was now sporting a headband to protect a cut above his right eye - went for the volley, and caught it perfectly. Henderson didn't stand a chance, as the ball screamed into the top left-hand corner of the net to restore the Kingz advantage once more - 3-2, and howl!

Back came Spirit, but the Kingz defensively, rode their luck, somehow fending off all that their opponents could throw at them, including a last-minute penalty claim which referee Micallef waved away.

The home side could well have found the target again before the end, Leigh Kenyon's diving header and Stergiopoulos' adventurous run, with the aid of Jones and Batram Suri in the latter case, both going close to extending their advantage, which remained at 3-2.

It was a result which greatly boosted the Kingz spirits after their worst-ever mauling just five days beforehand, and a match which was a fine advert for the National Soccer League.

Oh for more of this ilk!

Soccer Warrior: Kingz captain Harry Ngata, who scored from the penalty in the 55th minute and... always dangerous Kingz, in country Sunday...
Soccer Warrior: Kingz captain Harry Ngata, who scored from the penalty in the 55th minute and... always dangerous Kingz, in country Sunday...

tion, his twenty-five yard free-kick flying narrowly past Utting's post.

The Kingz responded promptly, Perry heading a deep Campbell corner just past the post, moments before Rufer's free-kick, hit hard and low from the edge of the penalty area, was spilled by Henderson. Northern Spirit survived that 52nd minute scare, but were out of luck three minutes later, as the Kingz took the lead for the second time.

Capitalising on the space created ahead of him by Kingz debutant Noah Hickey, Jones fired over a super cross from the right, which was dropping perfectly for Lammers to attempt to execute a bicycle kick. He never made contact, however, but the gentle nudge which prompted his premature landing was spotted by referee Simon Micallef, who immediately pointed to the penalty spot, from where Ngata found the back of the net, despite Henderson's best efforts to deny him.

On the hour, Lammers squandered a splendid chance to extend the Kingz lead to 3-1, the ball getting stuck between his legs as he sought to convert a Rufer-inspired raid which featured a deft one-two between the player-coach and Campbell.

At the time, it seemed to be a crucial miss, as Spirit drew level once more just three minutes later. This time, Tony Perinich stole in on the blindside of the Kingz defence, only for Ivan Vichelich to partially block his cross. The ball fell invitingly for Cranney, however, the midfielder lashing home a thumping volley into Utting's top left-hand corner from the edge of the penalty area - yet another cracking strike in a match high on quality, with the most memorable goal of all still to come.

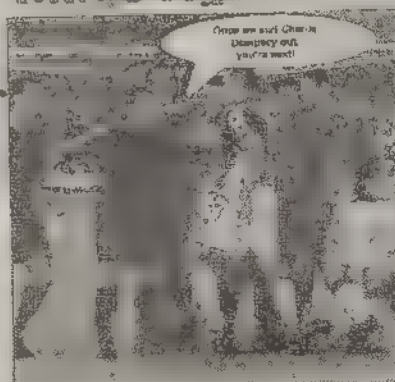
Before it did, Crook brought out the best in Utting, who made a tremendous save low to his left to thwart Spirit's player-assistant coach's venomous twenty-five yard free-kick in the 67th minute.

The Kingz immediately countered, led by the lively figure of Stergiopoulos down the right. His inviting cross left Henderson beaten all ends up, but Rufer

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Kingz fight back



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Top (lica) night for killer Cosmos

CANBERRA COSMOS 4

James 28, Popovich 38, De Jesus 55, Clark 83

SOUTH MELBOURNE 2

Anastasiadis 44, Liparoti 81.

Friday night at Bruce Stadium, Canberra. Crowd: 1,647.



MATCH STATS:



De Jesus

CANBERRA COSMOS: Barlow, Milin (Purdue 73), Popovich Polak (Prenzowski 81), Arranz, Hamilton, James (Watkins 66), Hooker, Clark, Roberts,



Alagich (Coveny 45), Lozanovski, Liparoti.

Yellows

Cosmos: Arranz (69), Clark (73), Hooker (89).
South Melbourne: Lozanovski (77).

Best Players:

3: POPOVICH (COSMOS)
2: Clark (Cosmos)
1: Lozanovski (SMelbourne)

Referee B. Hugo

repeated, such was the play of the team from Melbourne

We cannot take anything away from Canberra who finally showed that they can put the ball in the net, even though they missed a number of clear-cut chances and could have finished with at least eight goals.

Canberra played nothing like a "15th placed side" and their opponents looked more like a team that would be challenging for the wooden spoon.

Maybe it was the week's rest following the postponement of last week's match against Adelaide that made South look completely lacklustre, but this was not the team that had won last year's Championship, nor the Oceania title.

The game started slow with Canberra trying their best to speed up proceedings only to be frustrated by a quick passing South side. South controlled the ball for nearly all of the first 15 minutes and made their lesser-likes chase for possession. Yet, even through this glut of possession South were unable to even get near their opponent's goal.

Many teams have come to Canberra and used the plan of patience to wear down their opponents and then strike at the opportune moment and this looked no different. But the Cosmos have surely learnt their lesson and this night they weren't going to sit back.

A quarter of an hour gone and an Ivo de Jesus corner set off warning bells for South as it drifted over the pack to the far post - luckily for the visitors a red shirt was not within sight.

In the next ten minutes Canberra pressured and first David Arranz saw his shot parried for a corner and then David Milin was on the end of a nicely executed free-kick involving both Brian Hamilton and Paul Roberts only to see his volley fly over the bar.

On the 25 minute mark, Canberra had the first of their near 100% chances.

Harry James sent a ball that just cleared the defence leaving de Jesus racing in towards Chris Jones, but the striker lost control at a crucial moment and the ball rolled easily to the keeper.

The writing was on the wall as de Jesus reciprocated to James splitting the defence to put his fellow striker in with a chance. James turned back in towards the middle of the field and sent his shot passed the stranded Jones for his first goal of the

South could have struck back almost immediately when a Goran Lozanovski corner fell to the feet of Robert Liparoti, but he wasn't ready for the ball and it bounced straight to the waiting hands of Grant Barlow.

Yet this was a rare foray down in the Cosmos penalty area, as most of the action was at the other end. Andrew Clark had a shot well held and Roberts saw his attempt go wide.

Then in the 38th minute, Canberra doubled their lead in a nice worked move

straight off the training pitch.

A corner was taken short between de Jesus and Clark for the former to send his cross past the far post. There waiting totally unattended was James to send a rocket header back across goal for Toplica Popovich to head in from less than 2m out.

With time running out in the first half, South hit back. A throw went to David Clarkson who took the ball to the touch line before cutting it back into the box. Brian Hamilton miskicked the ball allowing John Anastasiadis to volley on the turn giving Barlow no chance.

Canberra should have scored again only a minute later when Roberts found himself free in the box after a James cross was only partially cleared.

Roberts placed his shot to the left, but the ball hit the upright and bounced away to safety.

The goal for South probably tempered down the tongue lashing Postecoglou was giving his boys at the break, and it obviously helped as they came out the tougher early in the second half.

Paul Trimboli, quiet through the first half, found himself free at the far post from a Jim Tsekenis cross only to volley well over and five minutes on Tsekenis fed Steve Panopoulos who volleyed across goal.

In the tenth minute of the half Popovich made his way down the right and pushed the ball forward for Clark. Clark beat the tackle of a defender and sent the ball into the box for de Jesus to chime in and put away the easy chance, restoring the two goal lead.

James, Clark and Hooker all had decent opportunities, James' the best, to increase the scoreline over the next ten minutes, such was the dominance of the home side. And in the 70th minute South were lucky not to concede an own goal when a Daniel Watkins cross rebounded off the chest of Liparoti and straight into Jones' hands.

The game was slowly dying when with under 10 minutes to go, Arranz gave away a silly freekick on the side of the box. As the Cosmos was trying to organize itself, Lozanovski sent in a quick free-kick providing Liparoti with an easy header to get his side back to a one goal deficit.

Canberra struck back two minutes later with the best goal of the game.

Clark intercepted a throw midway in the South half and took the ball all the way to the goal before slotting the ball past the exposed Jones.

Vaughan Coveny had the last shot of the game and as it sailed wide of the mark, so did South's chances of getting any result from this game.

Cosmos coach Tom Sermanni was very pleased with his team's performance, yet he believed that South's game suited his side well as "they play an open style of football."



This is the first time the team has scored four goals this season and Canberra's coach said "it's pleasing that we're creating the chances. Also the defence was well disciplined as we hardly let them in, especially in the first half".

"Still", Sermanni added, "we need to be more consistent in our games. If we could perform like this throughout then we'd be in a much better position".



By Nick Guoth

South Melbourne coach Ange Postecoglou held his side in the dressing rooms for a good half hour after the game. What was said there we'll never know, but after the performance of the Champions, some of the words probably could not be

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Grierson keeps Strikers in the finals hunt

BRISBANE STRIKERS 1

Kupresak og 57

SYDNEY UNITED 0

Saturday night at Suncorp Metway Stadium, Brisbane. Crowd, 1,706.



MATCH STATS:



BRISBANE STRIKERS:

1. Bolton, 2. Gwynne, 3. Stefanutto, 9. Foster, 10. Srhoj, 11. Hews (6 Dilton 71'), 12. Dwyer, 14. North, 16. Grierson, 17. Harris (19. Baldwin 63'), 21. McKain (8. Pilic 79')



SYDNEY UNITED:

30. Hughes, 4. Kupresak (23. Palapanis 79'), 5. Bosnar, 6. Savoca, 8. Arrate, 11. Pondeljak, 12. Maric, 15. Genc, 17. Bosevski (9. Jerman 57'), 18. Bozinovski, 24. Rakic (14. Rastall 54')

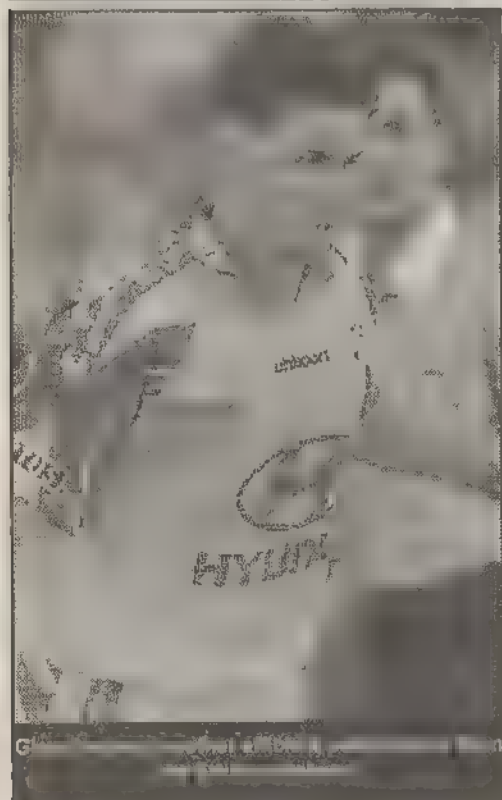
Yellows:

Brisbane: Paul Foster 39', Jade North 73', David Pilic 86'.
Sydney Utd: Andy Rakic 48', AYTEK Genc 66'

Best Players:

1 - PETER GRIERSON (BRISBANE)
2 - Glenn Gwynne (Brisbane)
3 - Brett Hughes (Sydney United)

Referee: Matthew Breeze



By Cameron Atfield

The Brisbane Strikers' delicate tight-rope walk to the finals was made a little easier when they beat cellar-dwellers Sydney United 1-0 at Suncorp Metway Stadium on Saturday night.

A second half own goal by veteran defender Velimir Kupresak, which was also claimed by Jeromy Harris, was enough to settle the ledger.

Saturday's crowd of 1,706 was Brisbane's smallest of the season - a far cry from those heady championship days

when an Australian record crowd of 40,446 saw Frank Fanna's Brisbane team defeat Sydney United to claim their only championship to date.

The first half belonged to Brisbane, and they had their first notable raid on Sydney United's goal just after the ten-minute mark.

Chay Hews linked well with Peter Grierson to get to the by-line. Hews pulled the ball back towards his teammates who were lining up to claim a goal, but the Sydney United defence was up to the task and cleared the ball to safety.

That move signaled the start of an enterprising, if not productive, period for the Strikers.

Harris had a good shot easily taken by United keeper Brett Hughes in the 16th minute, and almost had a dream chance a minute later.

Wayne Srhoj, who will be heading to Germany's VfB Stuttgart for trials at the end of the season with Joeys teammate Jade North, did well to steal the ball from United's Tom Maric and send in the cross to Harris.

The good work was undone when Harris overran Srhoj's cross.

Paul Foster still needed to regain some sharpness after his long injury lay-off. He missed an absolute sitter in the 23rd minute when his close-range header sailed over the bar seemingly easier to score than to miss.

One of the better chances of the first half fell to Srhoj. His long-range effort from outside the corner of the box beat Hughes in goal, but grazed the upright for a goalkick.

The teams went into the half time break at 0-0, and the Strikers especially would have been rueing the missed opportunities.

It did not take long for Brisbane to resume their assault on the Sydney United goal in the second half.

Grierson, the best on the field, had a thunderous 25 metre shot beat Hughes but not the crossbar.

He tried to make amends with a swerving, angled effort minutes later, but his attempt went just wide of the right post.

The goal Brisbane had been threatening for so long finally arrived in the 56th minute, but the scorer was open to debate.

Harris and Kupresak both challenged for the ball near the left post. It appeared to come off Kupresak's leg before dribbling in off the post, but Harris claimed the goal.

Either way, it was a goal for the Strikers and a well-deserved lead.

Sydney United coach Ivan Petkovic replaced Nick Bosevski with Mario Jerman in the 57th minute, and the move almost paid immediate dividends.

Jerman made a chance for himself after just two minutes on the park. He got into a one-on-one with Strikers keeper Clint Bolton, but the Socceroo keeper brilliantly smothered the raid.

Grierson had a goal disallowed for offside at the other end of the park. North did well to get the ball into Grierson, but the former Liverpool junior's well-placed shot was to no avail as the linesman raised his flag.

Brisbane coach John Kosmina would have been perplexed by some of referee Matthew Breeze's decisions in the second half.

AYTEK Genc lashed out at Strikers defender Jon McKain from behind, an attack that left the youngster hobbling and eventually replaced.

Genc was shown a yellow card, but he could think himself extremely lucky to stay on the park.

Sydney United players milked yellow cards for North and David Pilic by directing quickly taken free kicks into them before they had the chance to retreat 10 metres, a tactic that infuriated Kosmina.

"Breeze gave some shocking decisions against us - how can he give Davie Pilic a card if he's running away from the ball and the guy kicks it into his back?" he said.

"But like most referees, he's got no idea."

Despite that, Kosmina said he was pleased to have the much needed three points in the bag.

"It was an important win for us tonight. We made it tough for ourselves - our finishing was atrocious, and that's probably being kind."

"We can take a lot out of tonight because we played well. The first half especially was fantastic. With the opportunities we created, we should have had at least three in the first half."

He said Harris and Foster up front were sadly lacking in match practice.

"Jezza (Harris) hasn't played up front for a long time and really has to fix his first touch up - he couldn't trap a medicine ball tonight," he said.

"We played well enough to have won the game quite comfortably, but we couldn't take our chances."

"That's what let us down against Carlton last week. Fossie had two sitters tonight which, ten weeks ago, he wouldn't have thought twice about."

Petkovic said he thought his side deserved to get something out of the match.

"I think it would have been fair for us to share the points," he said.

"Brisbane played better than us in the first half, but in the second half we played much better, especially after the goal."



Sydney United has no hope of making the finals, and Petkovic said he is using the rest of this year to blood some new players and shake up some of the top teams.

"At the start of the season, 16 players left the club, so we had only a couple of players with National League experience," he said.

"So we're trying out some youth and Super League players to get them ready for next season, and hopefully we can buy a couple of players too. I think next season will be much better for us."

Kosmina quashed speculation that young stars North and Srhoj would be heading to Stuttgart for trials as early as next month.

"They're not going anywhere," he said.

"They know they have commitments with us and they don't want to go until those commitments are fulfilled."

Kosmina said the trials at the end of the season would be a steep learning curve for the youngsters.

"The German league is probably the toughest in the world," he said.

"Both guys could have a look-in but they'll have to work hard."

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Horsley enlivens uninspiring draw

GIPPSLAND FALCONS 1

Vargas pen 66

WOLLONGONG WOLVES 1

Mennillo 9

Saturday night at Mobil Park, Gippsland. Crowd: 1,350



MATCH STATS:

By Lucio Viggiano



GIPPSLAND FALCONS

Jevdjovic - Fak - Gotis -
Durakovic - Marcina -
Hutchinson - Vargas -
Robertson - Bell -

Mandic (Nilo 82 min) - MacNicol Subs
not used: Savage, Puca



WOLLONGONG WOLVES

Pogliacomi - Souris -
Ceccoli - Stanton (Blake
90 min) - Horsley - Reid
- Mennillo - Chipperfield
- Spencer (Huxley 85
min) - Young - Petrovski (Robertson 75
min)

Yellow Cards:

Falcons: Bell 54 min

Best Player

3 HORSLEY

(WOLLONGONG WOLVES)

2 Marcina (Gippsland Falcons)

1 Mennillo (Wollongong Wolves)

In a game that never reached any great heights, both sides looked out of sorts in a lacklustre 1-1 draw at Mobil Park on Saturday night.

Wollongong came into the match high in confidence after a demolition job on the Football Kingz the previous week, while the Falcons desperately needed a good home performance to regain some support from the Gippsland community.

The match started with play confined to the midfield, neither side able to string any telling moves together.

The first chance of the game resulted in the first goal of the match. Man of the match Matt Horsley broke away from his marker John Hutchinson down the right flank and delivered the perfect cut back across the goalmouth.

With the Falcons defenders flatfooted, Dino Mennillo stroled in to tap in an easy goal. 1-0 to Wollongong.

With an early lead, Wollongong made it clear they were happy to sit back and not over extend themselves. With Mennillo, Reid, Chipperfield and Horsley prominent, Wollongong closed down the Falcons midfield forcing them to play long searching balls that Souris, Ceccoli and Stanton had no trouble dealing with.

It took until the 24 minute for the Falcons to have their first strike on goal, with a speculative long-range effort by the hard running Mandic going just over the crossbar.

The only other chance of the half went to the Wolves when Ceccoli set up Petrovski down the left.

Petrovski made position well, beat a committed Jevdjovic in the Falcons goal only to see a tame effort cleared away easily by Dean Fak.

The second half began with the Falcons trying to up the tempo of the game. Doug Marcina was noticeably more involved, as were Vargas and Robertson in the Falcons midfield.

It was the Wolves however who continued to have the best chances. A long range effort by Noel Spencer in the 60 minute tested Jevdjovic in the Falcons goal, who could only parry the ball away.

A great run through the midfield by Paul Reid a minute later set up Stuart Young for one of the best chances of the game.

Young put through perfectly by Reid had his shot well saved by Jevdjovic down low.

Marcina was in everything for the Falcons, making great runs down the right from deep and caus-



ing panic in the Wolves defence.

It was from one such run in the 65 minute that Marcina found himself clear on goal only to be brought down on the edge of the penalty area.

A rare moment for the Falcons, who celebrated the club's first home penalty awarded since Round 1 of season 1995/96.

A nervous Mobil Park crowd relieved to see Andy Vargas calmly slot the ball past Pogliacomi. 1-1.

The goal lifted the tempo of the game, the Falcons realising they had a chance to steal the points and Wollongong realising they actually had a game on their hands.

Suddenly, Robertson and Vargas had control of the midfield for the Falcons and Nick Theodorakopoulos was forced to make changes to try and get the three points the Wolves assumed would come easy.

The Wolves had the best opportunities to take the three points. A great turn and shot by Horsley on the edge of the penalty area in the 33 minute just went wide of the upright.

Then an unmarked Stuart Young in the 42 minute went for power rather than placement to spray probably the best chance on the night across the face of goal.

In the end a draw was a fair result in a game that both sides failed to deliver.

The Wolves, renowned for their open attacking style of play, never looked like a title contender on the night and the Falcons battled hard but yet again rarely looked like scoring enough goals to win the game.

Best player on the night was the polished Socceroo Matt Horsley. His speed and strength on the right flank lead to the Wolves goal and was a constant headache for the Falcons.

Doug Marcina's single hand-

ed effort in the second half led to the penalty equaliser and only when he got involved did the Falcons look at all dangerous.

Dino Mennillo yet again showed why he is so highly rated. His hard running and ability to find space was a constant threat to the Falcons defenders.



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Beardsley's glorious farewell



MELBOURNE KNIGHTS 1
Susa 7.

PERTH GLORY 0

Saturday night at Knights Stadium, Melbourne. Crowd: 5,457.

MATCH STATS:



MELBOURNE KNIGHTS: John, Rajher, Kovacevic, Vukadin, Silic, Nastevski, Kiratzoglou (Banini 90"), Susa (Magdic 87"), Vargas, Beardsley, Kelic (Cervinski 77").



PERTH GLORY: Petkovic, Trajkovski, Miller, Thorp, Hamwell (Buljan 80"), Valle, Naven, Afkos (Despotovski 45"), Edwards (Carbone 62"), Aurelio, Ergic.

Yellow:
Glory: Hamwell 45.

Best Players:
3. SUSA (KNIGHTS)
2. Silic (Knights)
1. Vargas (Knights)

Referee: Gerry Connolly



By Mark Fisher

The Melbourne Knights' push to make the playoffs remained surprisingly alive by late Saturday night after Vlado Vanis' charges took the game right up to the visiting Glory men. Not even a 150-strong contingent of Melbourne-based Glory fans could inspire their side to victory, which would have seen Perth temporarily climb above Sydney Olympic as league leaders.

Without the services of Wehrman, Halpin and Edgar available, not to mention Con Boutsianis (on loan at Bolton Wanderers), Perth went into the match with a largely experimental line-up.

Bernd Stange admitted during the post match conference that he made selection "mistakes" for a match that the Knights largely dominated from the outset.

Indeed the Knights got away quickly following a Kiratzoglou chip intended for the head of Ivan Kelic, yet Kelic proved unable to position himself in between the ball and Jason Petkovic's waiting gloves.

Only seven minutes into the contest, Mark Silic found space and direction to set up the only goal of the match. Silic made a central surge towards the area, and flicked on to Kiratzoglou, who moved well inside of his customary right flank.

Kiratzoglou, just inside the box, passed back to Silic immediately, who then gave off the ball to Zeljo Susa on the right just short of the by-line.

Susa, whose line of sight on goal was vacant of all obstructions except for the 'keeper, drilled the ball home from such an amazingly acute angle that the shot would have surely impressed even Ned Zelic.

With a one-goal lead under the belts, the Knights then tried their fortunes down the flanks. Alex Kiratzoglou was as tireless as ever, and he found space down the right with relative ease.

Zeljko Susa was a stand out player in the middle, who kept the flow going for Melbourne in a display that was highly entertaining for the crowd.

Perth's passing game broke down more often than not, giving the Knights opportunities they clearly never had when Perth last visited Knights Stadium during round three.

On that occasion it was Trajkovski and Boutsianis that wrought a 3-0 demolition job on the crew from Somers Street.

Perth were restricted to about four chances on goal all match, but did show glimpses of their regular form with Dion Valle heavily marking Peter Beardsley out of the first half contest.

Beardsley's one and only touch in the first half might have fleetingly given Vlado Vanis cause to contemplate substituting the English legend yet again.

Nevertheless, 'Beardo' came out in the second half in a more composed manner, and maybe that was due in part to his being dropped back from a striking role to central midfield for the last forty-five minutes of the match.

Beardsley did fire two shots that evaded the mark by a short distance - one behind the goal in the 62nd minute and a 'beautiful miss' a metre over the bar in the 81st minute.

Add to these his superb cross to Susa to set up a fluffed chance at goal, and you have the makings of a nostalgic story along the lines of "I was there when the great Peter Beardsley played in the NSL..."

The Knights found plenty of room to work with during both halves, given that Perth offered them more space by pulling back their makeshift central midfield whenever the Knights looked to counter-attack.

Perth's wingbacks often found themselves hassled by two or more players on a num-



ber of occasions, such was the determination of the home team.

Mark Silic was especially quick to swoop on anything even semi-loose in the middle.

The injection of Bobby Despotovski after the break helped Perth to look on the whole a much more threatening proposition.

Robert Trajkovski planted a sweet cross in the vicinity of Despotovski with twenty minutes to go, yet the ball just drifted overhead and out of danger for Martin John.

Trajkovski later put in another good

cross three minutes out from time, yet on this occasion the ball deflected off the foot of a defender for a corner.

Hamilton Thorp, playing sweeper in this match, turned attacker at times to shoot wide twice. With utility players like Thorp at his disposal, Stange does have quite a few options at his disposal, although it is highly unlikely he will experiment much further in the run home to the finals series.



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Returned Stallions earn the victory



MARCONI STALLIONS 3

Awaritefe 20, og 87, Sean Babic 90+.

SYDNEY OLYMPIC 1

Cardozo 76.

Sunday night at Marconi Stadium, Sydney. Crowd 6,013.

MATCH STATS:



MARCONI STALLIONS:
Turnbull, Kim, Babic M.
Longo, Invincible, Smith
(Renaud 78), Care (Zoric
72), Gibson, Maloney,
Awaritefe (Trajanovski
72), Babic S.



SYDNEY OLYMPIC:
Perosh, Juric, Tsekenis,
Baillie, Zoricich, Wilson
(Jomaa 45), Zorbas
Phillips (Tome 46),
Cardozo, Arambasic
(Kalantzis 84).

Yellows:

Stallions: Maloney 36, Longo 70,
Sean Babic 78

Olympic: Phillips 14, Jomaa 50,
Thomas 60, Zoricich 66.

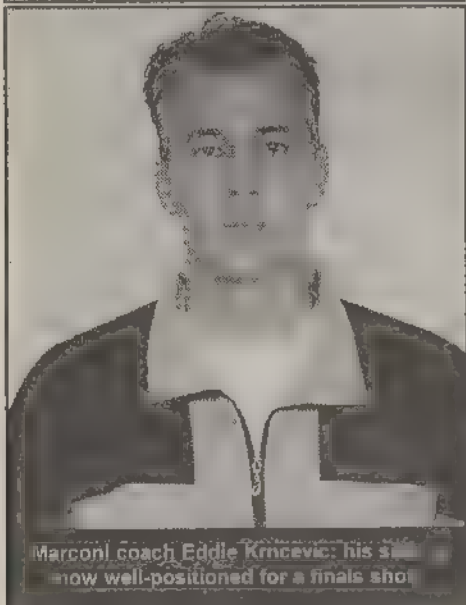
Best Players:

3. MARK BABIC (STALLIONS)

2. Maloney (Stallions)

1. Kim (Stallions)

Referee: Con Diomis



Marconi coach Eddie Krncevic: his side now well-positioned for a final shot

By John Vrtaric

It was the agony and the ecstasy for Olympic coach Branko Culina on Sunday night as he watched his Sydney Olympic team, dominated by an in-form Marconi, score an undeserved equaliser and then throw away a point with two soft goals in the last few minutes.

An under-strength Olympic team, missing the injured Gabriel Mendez, Nick Carle and the absent Olyroo Brett Emerton, went into this game desperate to hold onto the top spot against a Marconi team which had a number of players returning from injury.

Brad Maloney returned after missing last week's game because of injury (as was the official explanation at least), Francis Awaritefe was playing his second game after a long injury absence and, most importantly, they welcomed back sweeper, Pan-Keun Kim.

Along with an outstanding performance from the Babic boys, big Mark, who

excelled in defence and attack, and the super quick Sean, who posed loads of problems for the Olympic defence, especially in the latter part of the game, it was the returning players who destroyed the league leaders.

With Kim adding the control and poise that the team has been lacking all season and Maloney dominating the attack and throwing himself about in defence.

Marconi totally dominated the first twenty minutes of the first half. They should have scored at least two or three goals in the period but all they had to show at the end of the first stanza was a solitary goal to Awaritefe.

The mercurial Pablo Cardozo showed off his skill in the sixth minute when he nut-megged Kim and found himself just outside the penalty box but his attempt at a one-two with Arambasic went astray and the striker's brilliant piece of skill came to nothing.

This bit of skill was a false hope for the visiting fans and in the very next minute the crowd saw the beginning of the Brad Maloney show.

With reports suggesting that last week's absence was due more to form than injury Marconi captain had the look of determination that suggested he was going to play a significant role in this game.

He didn't spare himself when going in for tackles early on and in the eighth minute his attacking skills came to the fore.

Sean Babic headed back a Marconi goal kick back to Christian Care just inside the Olympic half. Care took the ball forward down the centre and visiting defence parted as Maloney made his run down the middle.

Care saw the run and played a well timed through ball which Maloney took in his stride a lashed a left foot drive just wide of John Perosh's right post.

A minute later Maloney collected a loose ball in midfield and relayed the ball to Care on the left - the Marconi midfielder sent a low left foot cross towards the Olympic penalty spot where Awaritefe sold the defence a great dummy with the ball landing at the feet of Maloney who had made a good run into the box.

Maloney's first touch was lacking and he had to hurry his right foot shot which squeezed past the far post.

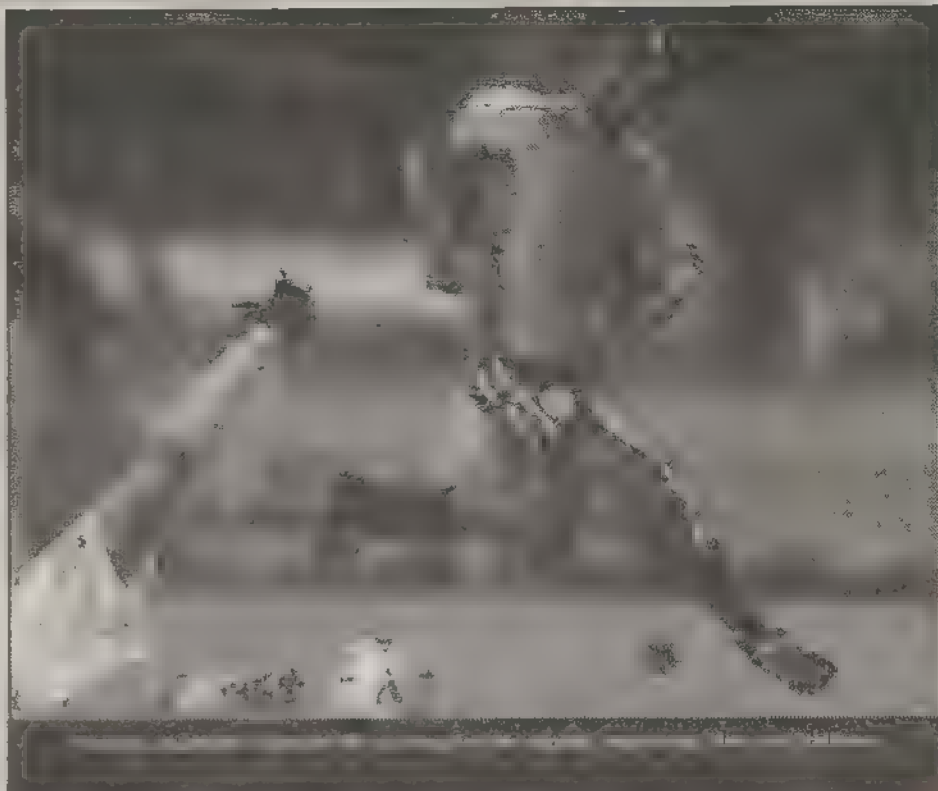
Two minutes later Care was again the provider, this time to Chad Gibson on the left whose measured strike was just wide of Perosh's near post.

With Marconi dominating the match the Olympic attack hardly got look in and in the 17th minute the home team came very close to opening the score.

An Ante Juric foul on Sean Babic on the Marconi left saw Gibson's free kick beat Perosh but it thundered into the base of the near post.

But the crowd who braved another stormy Sydney night didn't have long to wait for the opening goal.

In the 20th minute Mark Babic picked up a defensive clearance and majestically took it forward before laying it off to Maloney on the right. Maloney sent a perfect ground hugging cross to Awaritefe



whose left foot shot was brilliantly saved by Perosh's lunging right arm. But all he could do was push the ball to his right with Awaritefe the first to react and he was able to slide the ball past the keeper into the net.

The move was almost brought to an early halt when the linesman lifted his flag but quickly put it down and allowed play to continue.

After an incident free ensuing ten minutes Olympic were finally able to create a half chance. A one-two on the right between young Peter Zorbas and Chris Zoricich freed Zlatko Arambasic who was able to provide an accurate cross towards the middle where Cardozo's flick header from a good position was well wide of Michael Turnbull's right post.

Mark Babic had Marconi's next chance from a corner on the left after a Cardozo pass went astray. Awaritefe out-jumped teenaged Marconi 'keeper Turnbull on the far post and headed the ball back towards the penalty spot where Babic was lurking.

The big defender did well to strike the high bouncing ball with his left foot but wasn't able to keep down and it flew just over the bar.

Marconi went into the break with a well deserved lead but at one-nil an equaliser was one Cardozo magic away and Marconi were desperate for a two goal buffer.

In the 54th minute they got a perfect opportunity to provide themselves with a two goal cushion.

Maloney chased a deep ball and managed to harass a defender into a mistake and found himself in the clear 30 metres from goal. He saw Sean Babic looming in support on his left and decided that the striker was in a better position than himself. He timed his pass perfectly as he approached the 'keeper but his pass was too strong and sped past Babic who wasn't able to make the most of the ball as he was collared when he eventually got to the ball.

Four minutes later Zoricich hit a well struck left foot 25 metre shot that Turnbull had a bit of trouble pushing it over the bar.

The tempo of the match picked up and a number of half chances were created in the next 15 minutes. The best of these was Mike Smith's header from a free kick in the 61st minute which was well saved then his shot from the resulting

loose ball was blocked.

The resulting corner produced another header which was cleared off the line.

In the 68th minute a Zorbas cross from the right was hooked by Arambasic in front of Longo but the shot was deflected off the big defender and flew just over the bar for a corner.

A one-nil scoreline is often not enough and the winning team is susceptible. And so it proved for Marconi.

In the 76th minute Zorbas picked up a loose ball and passed it to Scott Thomas, who played a one-two with Cardozo, and tip-toed past a couple of defenders inside the Marconi box where he had a shot from almost the goal line just to the right of the goal.

His shot was saved but it ricocheted back to Zorbas whose shot was smothered and was deflected back to Thomas who skipped over an outstretched leg and pulled the ball back from the goal-line which was cleared by a defender straight into the body of Cardozo.

With the ball bouncing just in front of him Cardozo was the first to it and his left shot flew into the goal.

It looked as if Olympic would get out of jail but the last ten minutes produced some pulsating action with Marconi striving eagerly for the winner.

A short corner from the left allowed substitute Brendan Renaud a free shot but his right foot skewed well wide.

Three minutes later, in the 84th minute, Maloney was left free on the right but his volley hit the side netting.

But it wasn't long before Marconi got the upper hand, although it wasn't as a result of a brilliant piece of skill.

In the 87th minute an innocuous looking 30 metre shot from Gibson was well covered by Perosh until Scott Baillie stuck out his foot and wrong footed the 'keeper who could only help the ball into the net.

A Sean Babic move almost produced a third goal for Trajanovski but his shot was blocked and eventually cleared.

Cardozo came close to equalising in the first minute of injury time with a curling free kick before Babic scored the third Marconi goal in the next minute.

Perosh attempted to pass the ball just outside his box but he telegraphed his pass and Babic picked it up, easily beat the 'keeper and tapping it into the goal.

Ram

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ACTAS PUT FOUR PAST BREAKERS



Theo Katsaros reports that the A.C.T.A.S. scored a convincing 4-0 win over the Newcastle Breakers Colts at Bruce Stadium. The hosts led 1-0 at the break and secured the result with a three goal second half.

Daniel Aliffi (pictured above) netted after 27 minutes to put the hosts ahead. Michael Musitano, who has been absent through injury for most of the season, made a welcome return to the scorer's sheet when he struck after 65 minutes. Goran Veljanovski and substitute Paul Ivanic scored singles in the final five minutes to rub salt into the Breaker's wound.

League leaders the Parramatta Power continued on their merry way with a 4-1 victory at home. The Marconi Stallions Colts lead at the break but were overpowered by their opposition in the next 45 minutes. The dismissal of Alex Brosque in the 51st minute was the turning point.

The Power leveled courtesy of a 61st minute Brendan Santalab strike and led after 69 minutes when Matt Thompson scored. Five minutes later it was 3-1 as Luke Roodenburg netted before Monte Pfengle ended the scoring in the 82nd

minute

On Saturday, the Newcastle Breakers survived a tough encounter with the Sydney United Colts to record a 1-0 away win. Robert Angievski was the hero as he struck his 8th goal for the Breakers after 40 minutes.

A Morgan Cawley goal after 2 minutes got the ball rolling for the Q.A.S. as they defeated Sydney United 4-2. Lawrence Drake doubled the lead in the 18th minute before the visitors fought back with two goals in ten minutes.

Greg Saric and Matthew Zec scored for United to set up an intriguing second half. However, Saric turned from hero to villain in the 54th minute as he received his second yellow card and was dismissed.

The Q.A.S. took full advantage of the extra man as Drake bagged his second goal five minutes later and Russell Miner scored his 21st goal of the campaign to secure the points.

The Northern Spirit rallied from a goal down to beat their Colts by 3 goals to 1. John Majurovski scored on the stroke of half time to give the Colts a surprise lead.

However, the second half was one-sided as the Youth team took control. Ryan Griffiths equalised from the penalty spot in the 53rd minute before Adam Snyder scored on 76 minutes to give the Youth the lead. Todd MacRae ended any hopes of a late fight back by the Colts as he netted a couple of minutes from time.

The A.I.S. thumped the Wollongong Wolves Colts on Sunday in a match deferred from Round 15. The 8-0 result may be all the Institute need to kick-start their charge up the ladder. The hosts led 3-0 at the break and increased the margin in the second half.

Mark Tsiortas scored twice within half an hour and Mitchell Prentice also netted before the break. The second half was dominated by Franco Parisi as he scored a double and substitute Goran Talevski who scored a hat-trick after replacing Tsiortas in the 50th minute.

A goal to Ben Jarman in the 48th minute handed the Sydney Olympic Academy maximum points as they defeated the N.S.W.I.S. The teams follow each other on the ladder and it was always going to be a tough encounter.

A scoreless draw was fought out between the Marconi

Stallions and Sydney Olympic in the late match on Sunday night. The derby is always a close encounter and this match was no different.

Richard Beazley saw the AIS scored a convincing 2-0 win over the Wolves youth team in their NYL match at the AIS playing fields on Saturday evening. This was the team's first win in a few weeks and could be the turning point for the new squad.

The match was only six minutes old when a header from the AIS's Niall Fay was well saved by the Wollongong goalkeeper Daniel Beltrame after a superb cross from Radimir Sekulovski. From the resulting corner by Sekulovski, Franco Parisi's sublime header beat the Wollongong defence to allow the AIS to take a 1-0 lead.

The remainder of the first half was a torrid battle with referee Brendan Skinner struggling to retain control.

It looked as though the 1-0 lead would stand until the break, however the AIS had other ideas when Mitchell Prentice found the back of the net with a clinical finish from the edge of the penalty area to extend the lead to 2-0.

Within 8 minutes of the restart Sekulovski could have made it a 3 goal lead with a diving header touched out with a superb diving save by Beltrame.

The AIS was in control for the remainder of the match except however they did have to defend stoutly with Wollongong throwing every available player forward in an attempt to pull a goal back.

Replacement striker for the AIS, Mislav Saric made some superb runs at pace and caused the Wollongong defence some worrying moments.

Overall it was a very good performance for the AIS and their confidence will be increased after this match.

Best players for the AIS were Sekulovski, Parisi and Prentice. For Wollongong Beltrame was outstanding in goals and former Australian Schoolboy international Paul O'Grady stood out.

Injured AIS midfielder Ian Bonato commented after the game "the turning point in the match was the last 15 minutes before the half time break when we took a 2-0 lead. This set the benchmark for our strong second half performance and to go on with the match."

AIS: Wood, Sekulovski, Grenell, Tarka, Townley-Jones (Talevski), Wells, Prentice, Johnson, Fay, Tsiortas (Saric), Parisi.

WOLLONGONG: Beltrame, Dimech (Smith), Ashley (Burford), Rodriguez, O'Grady, Markovski, Sullivan, Dimitrievski, Lahanas, Lucas, Aldridge (Walker).

NORTHERN DIVISION

Leading Scorers	
Russell Miner	21
Ryan Griffiths	15
Daniel Severino	13
Franco Parisi	12

Round 27 Fixtures

SATURDAY 25 MARCH 2000	
Northern Spirit v A.I.S. (Christie Park - 4.30pm)	
Newcastle Breakers v A.C.T.A.S. (Breakers Stadium - 5.15pm)	
SUNDAY 26 MARCH 2000	
Sydney United v Parramatta Power (Sydney Utd Sports Ctr - 1.00pm)	
N.S.W.I.S. v Sydney United Colts (Valentine Park - 4.00pm)	
Marconi Stallions Colts v Woll. Wolves Colts (Marconi Stad - 4.00pm)	
Syd. Olympic v Syd. Olympic Academy (Belmore Sports Gmd - 4.00pm)	
Wollongong Wolves v Marconi Stallions (Brandon Park - 4.00pm)	
Bye - Northern Spirit Colts	

By Roy Hay

Carlton had a comfortable four-one away win over Gippsland Falcons. Mathew Nikolic converted a penalty early to set Carlton on its way, then Dusko Delic scored after half an hour.

Colin Azzopardi made it three in 43 minutes before Michael Katz got a goal back for the Falcons. Midfielder Mark Sintelli, formerly with Fawkner and the Victorian Under-15s, completed the scoring for the Dark Blues late in the game.

The VIS dominated its match with Preston at Connor Reserve but found it hard to score and the Preston keeper had a fine match. Michael Sham-Yuen who has made a smooth transition from top scorer for the Victorian Under-14s to a goal a game performance for the VIS scored early. Ricky Chillico hammered in a twenty metre effort, then played a series of one-tuos with David Terek before his second goal. The only downside to the match was that a young Preston player broke his leg late in the game.

Emile Merrick has picked up several of the Under-14s for scholarships including Ibrahim Ibrami, Manny Karras and Sam de Vito, while Spase Dilevski and Cerkar Oksuz are outstanding talents as well. The VIS will be off to Malaysia on tour in a couple of weeks time.

Melbourne Knights put five goals past Fawkner Blues at Knights Stadium with the league's top scorer Anthony Pelikan completing a hat-trick in 28, 57 and 85 minutes. Carmelo Impiombato and Michael Reda had scored early on with goals in 13 and 12 minutes respectively. Fawkner tried hard but found the Knights defence in top form, especially Josip Loncaric, Ivica Klarica and Jasmin Sehic.

South Melbourne travelled to the border and beat Albury Wodonga by four goals to nil. A goal by Elias Dimourtzidis after only 45 seconds, who latched on to a through ball and chipped the ball over keeper Sam Chambers, put the Blues on their way. Adrian Cuzzupe buried a penalty kick after Jason Whitten was somewhat harshly penalised when he seemed to take the ball first. Tass Psonis scored his third goal in successive matches after 63 minutes and Rade Culibrik completed the tally after 77 minutes, picking the ball up in his own half and running through a tiring defence for a fine individual goal.

David Poole of South Melbourne commended the Albury back-up staff for their fine hospitality which was a highlight of the trip north.

South Dandenong beat the Melbourne Knights Academy by two goals to one at George Andrews Reserve. Christian Barra scored in the first half for South Dandenong after the Academy had a large slice of the play in the first 35 minutes, with Hrvoje Matkovic hitting the crossbar.

The Academy pressed hard in the second half gaining an equaliser through Thomas Baldovinis. But South Dandenong fought back to gain the winner through Qemal Korcarevski.

Daniel Rajher was a top player in defence for South Dandenong while Daniel Piorowski had another excellent game at the heart of the Academy backline and stand-in keeper Adam Petko stopped a number of South Dandenong attacks.

SOUTHERN DIVISION NYL

Preston Lions 0		VIS 3	
Gippsland Falcons 1		Chillico 2 Sham-Yuen	
Katz.		Carlton 4	
South Dandenong 2		Nikolic, Azzopardi,	
Barra, Korcarevski		Delic, Sintelli	
Albury Wodonga 0		Knights Academy 1	
		Baldovinis	
		South Melbourne 4	
		Dimourtzidis, Cuzzupe,	
		Culibrik Psonis,	
		Fawkner Blues 0	
Melbourne Knights 5			
Pelikan 3 Impiombato,			
Reda			

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
CARLTON	16	13	3	0	64	9	42
VIS	16	12	1	3	47	12	37
Melbourne Knights	16	9	2	5	45	28	29
South Melbourne	14	9	0	5	40	14	27
Bulleen InterKings	15	8	2	5	38	28	26
South Dandenong	15	6	3	6	22	27	21
Gippsland Falcons	15	6	3	6	27	33	21
Fawkner Blues	14	4	3	7	16	32	15
Knights Academy	14	3	0	11	12	31	9
Albury Wodonga	16	2	2	12	18	61	8
Preston Lions	15	1	1	13	13	67	4

NORTHERN DIVISION NYL							
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Parramatta Power	24	18	4	2	74	18	58
Northern Spirit	24	17	4	2	73	27	55
Sydney Olympic	24	14	5	2	61	32	47
A.I.S.	25	14	3	1	8	78	36
Q.A.S.	23	14	2	2	7	67	38
Newcastle Breakers	22	14	1	1	6	42	25
Marconi Stallions	19	12	1	1	6	50	24
Sydney United	23	12	1	1	10	40	37
Wollongong Wolves	24	10	4	2	10	33	36
A.C.T.A.S.	23	9	6	2	8	39	43
Newcastle B'kers Colts	24	9	2	1	13	36	48
Syd. Olympic Academy	23	9	1	2	13	42	69
N.S.W.I.S.	22	5	5	2	12	34	38
Marconi Stallions Colts	23	5	4	1	14	35	65
Northern Spirit Colts	25	4	6	1	15	25	58
Sydney United Colts	22	3	3	2	16	22	54
Woll. Wolves Colts	22	0	2	2	20	11	106

ROUND 26

A.C.T.A.S.	4	Newcastle B'kers Colts	0
D Aliffi 27', Musitano 65',			
Veljanovski 85', Ivanic 88'			
Parramatta Power	4	Marconi Stallions Colts	1
B Santalab 61', Thompson 69',			
Roodenburg 74', Pfengle 82'			
Sydney United Colts	0	Newcastle Breakers	1
		Anglevski 40'	
Q.A.S.	4	Sydney United	2
Cawley 2', Drake 18', 60',		Saric 22', Zec 30'	
Miner 65			
Northern Spirit Colts	1	Northern Spirit	3
(Majurovski 44')		R Griffiths 53' pen,	
		Snyder 76', MacRae 88'	
A.I.S.	2	Wollongong Wolves	0
Parisi 6', Prentice 43'			
Sydney Olympic Academy	1	N.S.W.I.S.	0
Jarman 48'			
Marconi Stallions	0	Sydney Olympic	0
A.I.S.	8	Wollongong Colts	0
Tsiortas 15', 26', Johnson 28',			
Parisi 55', 81', G Talevski 58',			
74' 76'			
Bye(Rnd 26) - Wollongong Wolves Colts			

Tuggeranong's strong fightback

The 2000 WIN TV Federation Cup will be fought out by Gungahlin Juventus and Tuggeranong United. Both teams won their semi-finals by the odd goal. The third place playoff will see Canberra Deakin play Canberra Olympic. The games will be held next Sunday afternoon at Greenway Oval.

By Kyle McGarrigle

Tuggeranong United moved through to the Federation Cup final after defeating Canberra Deakin 2-1 in the wet.

Canberra Deakin took first blood scoring after only 80 seconds with some exciting play.

Zoran Glavinic chipped the ball to Paul Ivanic who then crossed it into Luka Udjur, who left the goal keeper little chance of saving the ball.

It looked as though Tuggeranong would level the scores 10 minutes into the game with David having a good shot after a nice pass through from Mark Conlon, however a great save kept Deakin in the lead.

Tuggeranong finally equalised in

the 44th minute with John Osti putting a good header into the back of the net after a nice cross.

Tuggeranong's second came just five minutes into the second half.

After some good individual work from Conlon down the left flank, he fired a shot low and hard into the bottom left hand corner of the goal, where Deakin goal keeper Jovancic Naumouski let the wet ball slip through.

After being down 2-1

Canberra Deakin did try to get back into the match, however the combination of good defence and solid goal keeping from Warren-Smith kept them scoreless in the second half.

A disappointed Canberra Deakin coach, Bernie Lustica said over confidence brought them down:

"Our boys I think thought the game was over at 1-0, they couldn't pick themselves up after that, they thought it was too easy and there is a lot of soul searching there for them."

"The urgency was there at the end, but soccer is a funny game".

Tuggeranong United coach Graham Platt was pleased with his sides win, "we had worked a lot on defensive patterns and it worked out brilliantly today".

Lazzari powers Juve to Fed Cup final

By Nathan Long

Gungahlin Juventus advanced to the final of the ACT soccer Federation Cup with a 2-0 win over Canberra Olympic at Queanbeyan's Riverside Stadium on Sunday.

Rain before the start of play, as well as Riverside's long grass ensured a fast, slick playing surface.

Juventus dominated the first half, controlling possession and getting most of the chances.

In the sixth minute Lazzari fired off a shot at goal. It was blocked by Olympic keeper David Collins and Juventus striker George Cattanach got to the rebound and shot, only for Collins to come up with another save.

In the 25th minute John Glass was brought down in an illegal tackle on the edge of the penalty area by Olympic's Tsiokos. Glass took the free kick only to have Collins bat it away from the top left corner.

Two minutes later, Nial Stoddart shot over the crossbar. In the 31st minute, Stoddart dribbled across the top of the penalty area angled a shot past Collins into the right side of the net for a 1-0 lead.

Olympic had a genuine chance three minutes later when Elia Salloum worked a 1-2 with Robbie Perinovic, only to have Juventus keeper Tony Giannasca make the save.

Two minutes into the second half, Juventus struck what would be the killer blow. It started with Craig Rankine feeding Steve Lazzari on the top left edge of the penalty area.

Lazzari dribbled right and unleashed a shot into the bottom left corner of the net.

From that point, Olympic became increasingly desperate to score.

They created many half chances only for Giannasca to deny them every time.

Olympic's best chance came with a free kick in the 78th minute. Steve Vazetti fired off a hard shot, only for it to crash into the cross bar and be cleared safely.

The Juventus defence clogged the middle of the field and saw Olympic resorting to taking long-range shots. Juventus held on for a 2-0 win and a meeting with Tuggeranong United.

Juventus coach Ian Heywood was pleased with his side's effort.

"We scored two good goals and, yeah, we did a fair bit of defending in the second, but we proved we could also defend, not just score goals," he said.

Olympic coach Baz Giampaulo said the goal straight after half-time was hard to accept.

"I thought in the first half we were very poor. I don't know what we were thinking. We just didn't support the ball carrier at all," he commented.

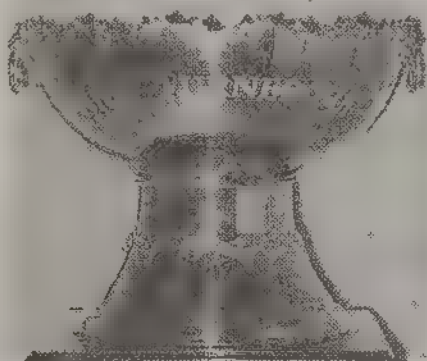
BILL TURNER CUP

COMING SOON TO INSIDE SOCCER



2000

Handbook & Draw



LG

LG BILL TURNER CUP
15 YEARS SOCCER

What happened in NSW

Sydney sweltered under very hot and humid conditions for the weekend's fixtures, with the conditions requiring fitness and reserves of energy.

In Super League on the Saturday, Blacktown was the only 'expected' winners out of the three games - defeating Central Coast 4-1 at The Gabby, after going into the break 2-1 up. After impressive early season form, it could be that Central Coast's bubble has burst as we get near the half-way mark of the season.

Macarthur Rams had to admit that Eastern Suburbs were the better side at Lynwood Park after going down to the Wanderers 3-1, despite the Rams' greater possession. Jimmy Aschner for Eastern Suburbs had another strong performance.

The upset of the night came when Bankstown proved the bogey side to Bonnyrigg once again, snatching a 3-2 win away at the Sebian Centre.

Bonnyrigg looked firmly in control at half-time being 2-0 up, but a speculative long range chip from skipper Mark Abi-Arrage deflected past the Bonnyrigg keeper in the shadows of half time and the visitors were back in the game. Together with an own goal and a penalty, Bankstown managed to come away winners.

On Sunday, torrential rain and an electrical storm made conditions treacherous for players and officials in some parts of the city - a welcome relief from the humidity - with one game abandoned midway through the second half and others played in deteriorating weather.

Parramatta led Sutherland 2-0, but after referee Alex Spiroski had delayed the second half by fifteen minutes it proved impossible to continue midway through that period and the game was eventually called off.

Jimmy Patikas' new-look Canterbury went down 4-2 to Joe Watson's Fairfield at Henson Park, after having bounced back mid-week when they beat Sutherland in a Round 10 delayed fixture.

St George had an early scare from Manly Warringah, but managed to win 4-2 (see Ben Cubby's match report on page 21.)

Leichhardt Tigers took time to subdue Penrith, though they did lead quite early on from a Fabio Macolino strike. Joe Bruni wrapped it up 2-0 with a second half goal to keep the Tigers on top of the table.

Super League top scorers: **Johnny Ghiso Bonnyrigg 10, Jimmy Aschner Eastern Suburbs 10, Steve Karavatakis Leichhardt 10, Mark Hagger Blacktown 9, Joe Bruni Leichhardt 9, Jim Bakis St George 8, Nikolce Joseski Parramatta 7, Matthew Borg Fairfield 7.**

In First Division there were wins for Dulwich Hill 2-1 over A C United, Fraser Park 5-1 against Ryde City, Bathurst 3-2 victors of Stanmore, MSC Moorebank another win over old rivals Hurstville City 3-2, while Hajduk Wanderers beat Illawarra 3-1 and Rockdale won 4-2 at Auburn.

Super League match reports on following pages.

Demons simply too good

BLACKTOWN CITY 4

Hagger 10, 46, 70, Foxe 16.

CENTRAL COAST 1

Byrn 11.

Whether it was the oppressive heat and humidity or the shock benching of Coasties captain, and 1999 Super League Player of the Year, Peter Preston, the Coasties gave their worst performance of the season at Gabbie Stadium against a rampant Blacktown City on Saturday night.

Blacktown striker Mark Hagger, who scored a hat-trick, and Naoki Imai tore the Coasties defence apart and only for poor finishing Blacktown could have doubled their goal tally.

The first ten minutes was pretty even and it looked like developing into a competitive match but then Hagger won aball in a midfield tackle. He broke away from the visitor's defence and gave 'keeper Gary Meier no chance to give Blacktown a one goal lead.

One minute later Nathan Byrn hit the post for the Coasties but was in the right place to put away the rebound for the equaliser.

Then the Hagger-Imaya show took over. Three minutes later Hagger forced Meier to make a great save with the rebound finding Imai who blasted the ball over the top from six metres out.

One minute after that scare, Blacktown won a corner that was floated across the goal mouth and landed perfectly for Damien Foxe who had no trouble in putting it away on the far post for Blacktown's second goal.

Hagger and Imai continued their onslaught and each had at least two further easy chances before half time but failed to add to the score.

Within forty seconds of the restart, and before the Coasties realised what was happening, Hagger scored his second goal for a 3-1 scoreline.

To their credit Coasties tried to get

back into the game but were unable to penetrate the Blacktown defence.

Preston was brought on in the 56th minute and made a couple of his dangerous runs down the right hand side only to see his crosses into the goal mouth easily cleared away by the Blacktown defence.

Twenty minutes before the full time Paul Dee hit the Coasties cross bar with a great shot but the ball rebounded to Hagger again and the striker had no problem in putting the ball away for his hat-trick.

Preston made another run down the right and cut into the penalty area but his shot skidded past the far post.

Meier was forced to make another two great saves in the dying minutes - the first from Damien Brown who made a good run through a very tired Coasties defence and shot from eight metres and then Brown put substitute Adam Kwasnik through but Meier again saved the day by deflecting his shot for a corner.

At the final whistle Blacktown were worthy 4-1 winners whilst the Coasties - who meet Leichhardt Tigers this week, are yet to return to their early season form.

With four points separating the top seven teams in the Super League table and the season not yet reaching the half way mark, it is too early to start making predictions.

Blacktown have continued to improve after a mediocre start to the season and are looking strong whilst the Coasties, due to start a row of seven consecutive home matches, must return to the winning vein to keep in touch with the leaders.

BLACKTOWN CITY DEMONS

Greco, Yates, Riches, Foxe, Langan, Dee, Sermani, Hagger, Brown, Lower, Imai (Kwasnik)

CENTRAL COAST COASTIES:

Heier, Matthews, Steele, Peatey, Byrn, Roberts, Bennet (Drysdale) Demery (Preston) Binskin, Daley, Sontag.

NSW RESULTS

FEDERATION DIVISION ONE: FIRST GRADE: Dulwich Hill 2(R Todorovski 54m, T Pontidas 72m), AC United 1(N Rivera 24m) Hajduk Wanderers 3(J Boudaher 29m, D Brown 77m, J Anderson 60m), Illawarra Lions 1(S Kotevski 45m) Auburn United 2(D Keskik 80m, N Vares 21m), Rockdale City Suns 4(A Adamo 9m, P Apolevski 73m, S Najdoski 75m, Own goal 59m), Fraser Park 5(D Harding 25m/70m, P Darvi 29m, D Rosenthal 52m, D Ganes 80m), Ryde City Gunners 1(Own Goal 40m), Bathurst '75 3(M Lommer 23/89m, S Mutton 43m), Stanmore Hawks 2(E Briscoe 47/64m penalty), Hurstville City Minotaurs 2(B Radman 33m, S Panagakis 80m), Moorebank Sports 3(B Hewit 42m, A Mammoth 29/50m), **UNDER 21:** Dulwich Hill 2, AC United 1, Hajduk 3, Illawarra Lions 0, Auburn United 4, Rockdale City Suns 1, Fraser Park 2, Ryde City Gunners 1, Bathurst '75 1, Stanmore Hawks 2, Hurstville City Minotaurs 0, Moorebank Sports 0, **UNDER 18:** Dulwich Hill 1, AC United 4, Hajduk Wanderers 6, Illawarra Lions 3, Auburn United 0, Rockdale City Suns 6, Fraser Park 1, Ryde City Gunners 1, Bathurst '75 0, Stanmore Hawks 2, Hurstville City Minotaurs 1, Moorebank Sports 7.

FEDERATION DIVISION TWO: First Grade: Sydney University 0, Hurstville ZSC 0, Greystanes 7, Sydney District 0, Mt Druitt Town Rangers 2, Mt Pritchard 1, Hakoah 8, Central Coast Lakers 3, Hills United 0, Belmore Hercules 2, University of NSW 0, White City 2, **UNDER 21:** Sydney University 2, Hurstville ZSC 1, Greystanes 6, Sydney District 0, Mt Druitt Town Rangers 1, Mt Pritchard 1, Hakoah 3, Central Coast Lakers 2, Hills United 1, Belmore Hercules 1, University of NSW 2, White City 2, **UNDER 18:** Sydney University 1, Hurstville ZSC 2, Greystanes 1, Sydney District 4, Mt Druitt Town Rangers 1, Mt Pritchard 1, Hakoah 3, Central Coast Lakers 2, Hills United 1, Belmore Hercules 2, University of NSW 1, White City 3.

FEDERATION DIVISION THREE: First Grade: Nepean District 1, Western Sydney Lions 2, The Wanderers 8, Prospect United 3, Colo Colo 5, Balmain 0, Holy Cross Ryde 4, Liverpool City 0, Parramatta City 3, Trasandinos 0, Prainewood United 5, Camden Tigers 0, **RESERVE GRADE:** Nepean District 2, Western Sydney Lions 2, The Wanderers 3, Prospect United 0, Colo Colo 1, Balmain 1, Holy Cross Ryde 8, Liverpool City 1, Parramatta City 3, Trasandinos 4, Prainewood United 0, Camden Tigers 0.

FEDERATION DIVISION FOUR: FIRST GRADE: Maroubra United 2, Maroubra 2, Granville Greenisland, Sporting SCC Washed Out, Hawkesbury City 0, United Eagles 2, Auburn Star, Eastern Creek Pioneers Washed Out, Springwood 0, Kellyville Kolts 2, CSI Schofields 1, Sydney Crescent Star 8, **RESERVE GRADE:** Maroubra United 2, Maroubra 1, Granville Greenisland 2, Sporting SCC 2, Hawkesbury City 1, United Eagles 4, Auburn Star 1, Eastern Creek Pioneers 4, Springwood 1, Kellyville Kolts 1, CSI Schofields 3, Sydney Crescent Star 4.

FEDERATION FIVE: FIRST GRADE: Kosciusko 8, Hinchbrook Chiefs 0, Bossy 5, Lithgow Workmen 1, Birrong Sports, Liverpool Olympic Washed Out, Fairfield City, UTS Washed Out, Petersham 9, Western Sydney Passion 1, **RESERVE GRADE:** Kosciusko 3, Hinchbrook Chiefs 1, Bossy 1, Lithgow Workmen 1, Birrong Sports 0, Liverpool Olympic 6, Fairfield City 1, UTS 2, Petersham 2, Western Sydney Passion 1.

WOMENS STATE LEAGUE: FIRST GRADE: Bathurst City 0, Gladesville Hornsby Koalas 1, Roselands Raptors 5, CSI Schofields 0, St George Association 2, Inter Lions 1, UTS 1, Hajduk Wanderers 2, **GRADE 19:** Bathurst City 2, Gladesville Hornsby Koalas 0, Roselands Raptors 9, CSI Schofields 0, St George Association 9, Inter Lions 0, UTS 2, Hajduk Wanderers 2.

SUPER YOUTH LEAGUE: GRADE 13: Fairfield Bulls 1, Eastern Suburbs Wanderers 2, Sutherland Sharks 2, Bankstown City 0, Wollongong Wolves 3, Manly Warringah 0, Newcastle Breakers 4, Penrith Panthers 1, Central Coast Coasties 1, Leichhardt Tigers 0, Marconi Stallions 0, Blacktown City Demons 1, Parramatta Eagles 9, Sydney Olympic 1, St George 0, Sydney United 3, Canterbury Marrickville 0, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 5, Macarthur Rams 1, Northern Spirit 2, **GRADE 14:** Fairfield Bulls 3, Eastern Suburbs Wanderers 1, Sutherland Sharks 2, Bankstown City 1, Wollongong Wolves 4, Manly Warringah 0, Newcastle Breakers 5, Penrith Panthers 1, Central Coast Coasties 0, Leichhardt Tigers 6, Marconi Stallions 1, Blacktown City Demons 2, Parramatta Eagles 0, Sydney Olympic 1, St George 1, Sydney United 2, Canterbury Marrickville 0, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 6, Macarthur Rams 0, Northern Spirit 1, **GRADE 15:** Fairfield Bulls 0, Eastern Suburbs 0, Sutherland Sharks 0, Bankstown City 0, Wollongong Wolves 1, Manly Warringah Dolphins 1, Newcastle Breakers 3, Penrith Panthers 1, Central Coast Coasties 2, Leichhardt Tigers 0, Marconi Stallions 2, Blacktown City Demons 2, Parramatta Eagles 1, Sydney Olympic 1, St George 0, Sydney United 1, Canterbury Marrickville 1, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 4, Macarthur Rams 0, Northern Spirit 5, **GRADE 16:** Fairfield Bulls 2, Eastern Suburbs Wanderers 1, Sutherland Sharks 3, Bankstown City 4, Wollongong Wolves 1, Manly Warringah Dolphins 0, Newcastle Breakers 1, Penrith Panthers 2, Central Coast Coasties 2, Leichhardt Tigers 4, Marconi Stallions 0, Blacktown City Demons 0, Parramatta Eagles 2, Sydney Olympic 1, St George 0, Sydney United 1, Canterbury Marrickville 4, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 4, Macarthur Rams 1, Northern Spirit 5.

DIVISION ONE YOUTH LEAGUE: GRADE 13: Southern Branch 1, Hills United 0, Blacktown Association 4, Ryde City 2, Rockdale City Suns 2, Stanmore Hawks 2, AC United 7, Canterbury Association 0, Illawarra Lions 1, Hajduk Wanderers 2, Mt Pritchard 0, Nepean Association 1, **GRADE 14:** Southern Branch 2, Hills United 0, Blacktown Association 1, Ryde City 2, Rockdale City Suns 1, Stanmore Hawks 1, AC United 3, Canterbury Association 0, Illawarra Lions 1, Hajduk Wanderers 2, Mt Pritchard 0, Nepean Association 2, **GRADE 15:** Southern Branch 1, Hills United 0, Blacktown Association 0, Ryde City 4, Rockdale City Suns 1, Stanmore Hawks 3, AC United 5, Canterbury Association 0, Illawarra Lions 1, Hajduk Wanderers 1, Mt Pritchard 3, Nepean Association 1, **Grade 16:** Southern Branch 2, Hills United 0, Blacktown Association 3, Ryde City 1, Rockdale City Suns 3, Stanmore Hawks 2, AC United 3, Canterbury Association 0, Illawarra Lions 1, Hajduk Wanderers 0, Mt Pritchard 2, Nepean Association 3.

DIVISION TWO YOUTH LEAGUE: GRADE 13: CSI Schofields 1, Camden Tigers 4, Central Coast Lakers 3, Parramatta City 0, Granville Association 2, Mt Druitt Town Rangers 1, MSC Liverpool 2, Hawkesbury City 3, Hurstville City Minotaurs 0, Ku-Ring-Gai Association 1, **GRADE 14:** CSI Schofields 1, Camden Tigers 3, Central Coast Lakers 1, Parramatta City 0, Granville Association 2, Mt Druitt Town Rangers 2, MSC Liverpool 4, Hawkesbury City 4, Hurstville City Minotaurs 0, Ku-Ring-Gai Association 9, **GRADE 15:** CSI Schofields 4, Camden Tigers 1, Central Coast Lakers 4, Parramatta City 0, Granville Association 2, Mt Druitt Town Rangers 1, MSC Liverpool 5, Hawkesbury City 3, Hurstville City Minotaurs 0, Ku-Ring-Gai Association 2, **GRADE 16:** CSI Schofields 1, Camden Tigers 1, Central Coast Lakers 1, Parramatta City 5, Granville Association 1, Mt Druitt Town Rangers 0, MSC Liverpool 0, Hawkesbury City 4, Hurstville City Minotaurs 0, Ku-Ring-Gai Association 3.

SUPER CADET LEAGUE: GRADE 11: Fairfield Bulls 1, Eastern Suburbs Wanderers 5, Sutherland Sharks 5, Bankstown City Cubs 0, Wollongong Wolves 1, Manly Warringah Dolphins 0, Leichhardt Tigers 1, Central Coast Coasties 2, Marconi Stallions 1, Blacktown City Demons 1, Sydney Olympic 1, Parramatta Eagles 1, St George 1, Sydney United 0, Macarthur Rams 2, Northern Spirit 2, Canterbury Marrickville 1, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 1, **GRADE 12:** Fairfield Bulls 0, Eastern Suburbs Wanderers 6, Sutherland Sharks 1, Bankstown City Cubs 0, Wollongong Wolves 0, Manly Warringah Dolphins 1, Leichhardt Tigers 1, Central Coast Coasties 3, Marconi Stallions 2, Blacktown City Demons 3, Sydney Olympic 2, Parramatta Eagles 0, St George 2, Sydney United 1, Macarthur Rams 1, Northern Spirit 2, Canterbury Marrickville 7, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 0.

CADET LEAGUE DIVISION ONE: GRADE 11: Hajduk Wanderers 4, AC United 1, CSI Schofields 0, Central Coast Lakers 2, Hawkesbury City 2, Stanmore Hawks 3, Hills United 0, Ryde City 3, Hurstville City Minotaurs 1, Rockdale City Suns 3, Illawarra Lions 5, Parramatta City 0, Mt Pritchard 1, M.S.C. Liverpool 0, **GRADE 12:** Hajduk Wanderers 3, AC United 0, CSI Schofields 2, Central Coast Lakers 0, Hawkesbury City 1, Stanmore Hawks 2, Hills United 2, Ryde City 3, Hurstville City Minotaurs 1, Rockdale City Suns 1, Illawarra Lions 2, Parramatta City 2, Mt Pritchard 4, M.S.C. Liverpool 2.

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COASTIES

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Bakis double seals victory over Dolphins

ST GEORGE SAINTS 4

Augerinos 17, Bakis 48, 80p, Petratos 67.

MANLY WARRINGAH 2

Glucina 51, Turnbull 57p

At St George Stadium, Sydney.



By Ben Cubby

St. George survived a determined second-half fightback by Manly-Warringah to eventually register a deserved 4-2 victory.

Manly delivered a well-organised and tenacious performance, but the pace and creativity of the home side proved too much for them in the end.

In the pouring rain, and with lightning crackling down over the nearby Sydney airport, both sides started the match in a cautious, defensive frame of mind.

After 17 minutes of tentative football, St. George's first real attacking raid produced a goal. Elias Augerinos met Simon Verrender's high cross with a delicate glancing header that nestled into the corner of the net.

St. George continued to dominate the first half, thanks to the midfield authority of Augerinos and Mark Brennan, and the trickery of forward Jim Bakis.

Saints 'keeper Les Bihari was a virtual spectator, although he pulled off one sharp block to deny Manly's Andre Glucina in the 34th minute.

Bakis doubled the lead shortly after the half time break. Brennan won the ball wide on the left and crossed to Manuel Papageorgiou.

The impressive youngster crashed a header off the bar and Bakis followed up to smash past stranded Dolphins 'keeper Dean McCreath.

St. George then went down with a bad case of 'Iran syndrome', throwing away their 2-0 lead with an unexpected bout of shaky defensive work.

A seemingly innocuous Dolphins cross found the St. George backline at sixes and sevens, and Glucina arrived unmarked to stab the ball home.

Soon after the re-start, the same player was hustled over in the box and referee Jonathan Streater ignored his assistant's off-side flag and awarded a penalty. Reliable Manly midfielder David Turnbull scored the equaliser from the penalty spot.

Buoyed by their fortunate goal, the visitors pressured the quaking Saints. A wave of blue Dolphins shirts forced the ball into the net on the hour mark, but the effort was ruled out due to an earlier foul.

After enduring a few agonising moments, St. George broke quickly from defence and Augerinos drew a brilliant fingertip save from McCreath.

The resulting corner caused a scramble in the Dolphins' penalty box.

Bakis had a shot cleared off the line and the ball fell to Angelo Petratos, who made no mistake with a decisive low drive.

Manly's resolve evaporated somewhat after conceding the third goal, and a serious injury to midfielder Mite Talcevski further ruined their night.

The unlucky Talcevski, who joined the club from Leichhardt a few weeks back, was taken to hospital with a broken leg after contesting a fierce challenge on the wet turf.

With their lead restored, St. George coasted along for the remainder of the match. Maxi Sevares was a standout performer in the latter part of the game, constantly harassing the visitors down the right flank.

Papageorgiou was another who caught the eye. The inventive midfielder has recently forced his way into first grade, and he showed his ability on this occasion with a number of deft touches and darting runs.

He ran onto a through-ball in the 80th minute and was dragged down by Sean Robertson. Robertson was sent from the field and the free-scoring Bakis stepped up to seal victory from the penalty spot.

Manly had better luck in the lower grades, cruising to a 3-0 win in the Under-18's and then hanging on for 3-2 in the Under-21's.

St. George: Bihari, Maglis (Petrovski 89), Verrender, Kladis, Brennan, Sevares (Markopoulos 82), Petratos, Bakis, Augerinos, Galea, Papageorgiou.

Manly Warringah: McCreath, Glucina, Robertson (sent off 80), Foster, Beldham, Turnbull (Ranaldi 84), Talcevski (Mikulski 72), Hickman, D. Webb, S. Webb (Wilson 85), Pettenon.

Referee: Jonathan Streater.

Super League Tables

FIRST GRADE	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GD
LEICHHARDT TIGERS	10	7	1	2	14	22	14	
St George Saints	11	7	1	3	23	16	22	7
Blacktown City Demons	10	6	1	3	30	10	19	20
Bonnyrigg White Eagles	10	6	0	4	28	22	18	6
Bankstown City Lions	11	5	3	3	19	13	18	6
Central Coast Coasties	11	5	3	3	20	18	18	4
Parramatta Eagles	10	4	4	2	22	16	16	6
Eastern Suburbs	10	4	0	6	17	18	12	-1
Canterbury Marrickville	10	4	0	6	16	28	12	-12
Fairfield Bulls	10	3	2	5	17	19	11	-2
Macarthur Rams	10	2	4	4	14	16	10	-2
Manly Warringah Dolphins	10	2	3	5	13	24	9	-11
Sutherland Sharks	9	2	1	6	11	26	7	-15
Pennth Panthers	10	2	1	7	7	27	7	-20

UNDER 21	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS	GD
CENTRAL COAST COASTIES	11	7	2	2	18	12	23	6
Pennth Panthers	10	7	0	3	25	18	21	7
Parramatta Eagles	11	6	2	3	21	13	20	8
Blacktown City Demons	10	5	3	2	20	14	18	6
Manly Warringah Dolphins	10	5	1	4	22	19	16	3
Leichhardt Tigers	10	5	1	4	18	16	16	2
St George Saints	11	3	4	4	20	16	13	4
Macarthur Rams	10	4	1	5	13	20	13	-7
Sutherland Sharks	10	3	1	6	14	21	12	-7
Fairfield Bulls	10	3	2	5	14	18	11	-4
Eastern Suburbs	10	2	1	7	16	20	10	-4
Bonnyrigg White Eagles	10	2	4	4	13	17	10	-4
Bankstown City Lions	11	2	3	6	23	25	9	-2
Canterbury Marrickville	10	3	0	7	16	24	9	-8

UNDER 18	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GD
PARRAMATTA EAGLES	11	8	1	2	33	15	25	18
Fairfield Bulls	10	8	0	2	26	13	24	13
Blacktown City Demons	10	7	2	1	19	8	23	11
Leichhardt Tigers	10	6	1	3	25	16	20	9
Central Coast Coasties	11	5	1	5	26	18	17	8
Macarthur Rams	10	4	3	3	14	13	15	1
Bonnyrigg White Eagles	10	4	1	5	14	13	14	1
Bankstown City Lions	11	4	1	6	18	24	14	-6
Pennth Panthers	10	3	4	3	14	11	13	3
Eastern Suburbs	10	2	4	4	14	23	10	-9
Sutherland Sharks	10	2	3	5	13	15	9	-2
St George Saints	11	2	1	8	14	35	9	-21
Manly Warringah Dolphins	10	2	0	8	10	16	6	-6
Canterbury Marrickville	10	0	2	8	9	29	2	-20

SUPER LEAGUE

ROUND TWELVE

Saturday 25 March

Sutherland Sharks v Blacktown City - Seymour Shaw Park

Game 7 00pm (1st grade) - 5 00pm (21s) - 3 00pm (18s)

Central Coast Coasties v Leichhardt Tigers - Plum Park

Game 6 00pm (1st grade) - 4 00pm (21s) - 2 00pm (18s)

Penrith Panthers v St George Saints - Penrith Stadium

Game 7 30pm (1st grade) - 5 00pm (21s) - 3 00pm (18s)

Sunday 26 March

Manly Warringah Dolphins v Bonnyrigg - Cromer Park

Bankstown City Lions v Macarthur Rams - Jensen Park

Eastern Suburbs v Canterbury Marrickville - Wentworth Park

Fairfield Bulls v Parramatta Eagles - Nineveh Field

Games 3 00pm (1st grade)-1 00pm (21s)-11 00pm (18s).

Catch all the latest news on football in NSW in *Super Soccer OUT 23 March!*

www.soccernsw.com.au

FIRST GRADE: SUPER LEAGUE

BLACKTOWN CITY DEMONS 4

Hagger 10, 46, 70, Foxe 16

CENTRAL COAST COASTIES 1

Byrn 11

BONNYRIGG WHITE EAGLES 2

Luff 11, Hawruiuk 35

BANKSTOWN CITY LIONS 3

Abi-Arage 45, og 85, Younan 88 pen.

MACARTHUR RAMS 1

Williams 25

EASTERN SUBURBS 3

Aschner 8, 75, Holst 40

ST GEORGE SAINTS 4

E Augennos 17m, J Bakis 48/80m penalty, A Petratos 67m.

MANLY WARRINGAH DOLPHINS 2

Glucina 51m, D Turnbull 57m.

CANTERBURY MARRICKVILLE 2

S Wells 56m, S Christofordis 61m

FAIRFIELD BULLS 4

T Omac 2m, M Borg 46/55m, M Hoenselaars 84m

LEICHHARDT TIGERS 2

F Macolino 17m, J Bruni 65m.

PENRITH PANTHERS 0

PARRAMATTA EAGLES v SUTHERLAND SHARKS
(Washed out in the second half due to thunderstorm)

UNDER 21:

Blacktown City 1

Bonnyrigg White Eagles 2

Macarthur Rams 2

St George Saints 2

Canterbury Marrickville 0

Central Coast 2

Bankstown City 2

Eastern Suburbs 0

Manly Warringah 3

Fairfield Bulls 1

Parramatta Eagles 2

Leichhardt Tigers 1

UNDER 18:

Blacktown City 1

Bonnyrigg White Eagles 1

Macarthur Rams 3

St George Saints 0

Canterbury Marrickville 2

Parramatta Eagles 4

Leichhardt Tigers 1

Sutherland Sharks 0

Pennth Panthers 2

Central Coast 0

Bankstown City 4

Eastern Suburbs 1

Manly Warringah 3

Fairfield Bulls 5

Sutherland Sharks 1

Pennth Panthers 2

WOMEN'S SUPER LEAGUE ROUND FIVE RESULTS

NSW Inst Sport/Academy 4

Wollongong Wolves 0

Macarthur Rams 1

Nepean Association 3

Manly Warringah Dolphins 0

Gladesville Ravens 0

Sutherland Sharks 3

Central Coast 3

NNorth. NSW/HAS 4

Marconi 0s

ROUND SIX DRAW

Saturday 25 March

Manly Warringah Dolphins v Wollongong Wolves

Cromer Park 5 00 PM/3 00 PM

Sunday 26 March

Gladesville Ravens v Macarthur Rams

Peel Park 3 45 PM/1 45 PM

Sutherland Sharks v NSW Inst Sport/Academy

Seymour Shaw Park 3 00 PM

Marconi v Nepean Association

Marconi No 2 3 00 PM/1 00 PM

Northern NSW/HAS v Central Coast Lakers

Jack McLaughlin Oval 3 00 PM/1 00 PM

Mark Drysdale

300 games: Cop that!

Many players play 300 or more senior matches but very few are dedicated enough to play that amount for one club and even less play over 300 games for the same club in both junior and senior competitions.

One such player is the Central Coast Coasties Mark Drysdale, who obtained the 300 senior game honour against Macarthur Rams on Saturday, 26 February 2000 at Plum Park.

Apart from a season in Newcastle, a year touring Europe in 1988 before his marriage, and a year in 1988 due to business reasons, Mark has committed himself to his beloved Coasties

He joined the club in 1981 and played in the Under 17 team, from 1985 played in the senior teams working his way up from the Under 18's through to first grade in 1987

He has captained the first grade team and also been club captain. He toured Europe in 1980 with an Australian Under 16 team

When Drysdale had a year off in 1988 everybody thought it would be the end of his career but he surprised his team-mates by turning up for pre-season training in 1989 and immediately regained his first grade spot and has retained it ever since.

At 35 year of age his younger team-mates his experience has been invaluable to his younger team-mates especially this season when the Coasties are having an excellent time of it in the Super

League.

An engineer by trade, Mark is a senior constable in the NSW Police Force and is stationed at Hornsby. He has no problems 'dropping in' to training on the way home from work.

The Coasties, this year, are a real chance of winning competition honours and Mark would have an interesting decision to make if they ended the season on a high note. Would he quit and go out a winner or would he line up for 'just one more year'?

Only Mark knows the answer to that question. Should he make the big decision to retire the Central Coast of NSW will have lost a truly dedicated player who always gives one hundred per cent to his club both on and off the field.

He still has one aim - to beat current Coasties coach Dale Egeleton's club playing record of 306 senior games. Barring injury, the odds are that he will do it.

Whatever the outcome of this season, nobody can deny that Mark Drysdale has been an asset to soccer not only on the Central Coast, but also to the code as a whole.

Mark Drysdale, you're a gentleman and a champion - and that's hard to say



Central Coast Soccer legend Mark Drysdale 300-games

about a copper!

From everyone at Inside Soccer, we salute you Mark Drysdale.

Nikas nicks a last minute win for new coach Jim Patikas

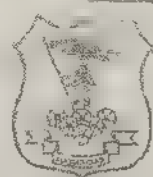
Sutherland Sharks 1

Harrod 60.

Canterbury Marrickville 2

Joannou 75, Nikas 90.

At Seymour Shaw Park



By Peter Smith

Soccer great Jim Patikas commenced his senior coaching career with a last gasp win over the Sutherland Sharks in the postponed fixture at Seymour Shaw last Thursday night. Patikas took over over the reins from the long serving John Xipolitas whose resignation was accepted last week.

Sutherland had the better of the opening stanza but were unable to transfer possession into strikes on target. After shots by Dejan Ristovski and Levi Stephen for the Sharks it was Canterbury who created the first real opening on 37 minutes.

However Steve Christoforides, after good lead up work by Jim Nikas, allowed Grant McDonald to make a miraculous goal line clearance when a firmer strike would have opened his sides account.

A similar scenario occurred at the other end right on the stroke of half time when Matt Merralls just failed to reach a flicked on header with the goal gaping.

The second half was all action with both teams playing in a very attacking vein, although on most occasions neither team was able to make that final telling pass that would have allowed for a clear cut strike on goal.

McDonald made a second stunning goal line clearance early in the second half to keep the scoreline blank before the games first goal arrived on the hour mark, and it was well worth the wait.

Clint Harrod driving the ball, from all off 40 yards, high over the retreating Frank Mikuletic after the Bernes keeper had been caught outside his box trying to intercept a Sutherland break.

Fifteen minutes later substitute Peter Joannou evened things up when he was given too much latitude in the box and had the space and time to finish with an impressive low drive into the far corner past former Bernes keeper Dennes Olla.

It was the first goal for the Bernes in almost 500 minutes

Whilst another goal looked likely at either end it was Sutherland who appeared to be feeling the humid conditions more and sure enough deep into stoppage time the game's decisive moment arrived

Nikas powerfully driving a free kick from 25 yards through a partly constructed wall to claim maximum points for the Bernes for the first time in five outings.

Canterbury will be hoping that they have now turned the corner but Sutherland will have little chance for respite as they are up against 1999 Champions Blacktown City at home on Saturday.

Zabica back for Inglewood Utd

By Brett Klucznik

On the final weekend of the qualifying rounds for the 2000 Midland Brick Night series, the Western Knights smashed seven goals past Rockingham City, Perth S.C. hit five past Bayswater Panthers and Fremantle City downed Ashfield/Bunbury.

On Wednesday night, the last qualifying night, saw Inglewood United sneak into the last four with a solitary goal triumph over Sorrento, while Cockburn City and Joondalup fought out a 2-2 draw.

With neither the Western Knights nor Rockingham City able to make the knock-out semi-finals stage of the competition, the Knights underlined that they will be serious title contenders when the winter season gets underway next month.

Newly promoted Rockingham were under the hammer from early on and it was only some resolute defending in the opening half that kept them in the match.

With 25 minutes elapsed, promising youngster Joe Vaz bundled the ball over the line in a goalmouth scramble to give the Knights a deserved lead.

This was doubled shortly before half-time when Eugene Singeorzan bagged his first goal of the night as City defended gallantly.

It was all one-way traffic after the break as the Knights overran their comparatively inexperienced opponents and only minutes after the re-start midfielder Vaz sent in an in-swinging corner which

City 'keeper Derek Kavanagh mis-judged and knocked into his own net. Singeorzan hit the sides fourth after 68 minutes, and a few minutes later Vaz created the fifth from a free-kick which was eventually touched over the line by John Nicolaou.

Twelve minutes before full-time Ivan Zuvelo lobbed the 'keeper for the sixth, and it was left to Singeorzan to complete the thrashing and his net his first hat-trick of the season with a close-range header.

In the late game, Floreat Athena clinched second spot in Group A with an impressive 5-1 win over Bayswater Panthers.

Robin Dyers scored his first goal for Athena since moving from Fremantle City early in the match and ex-Glory striker Vas Kalogeracos hit a 25-metre thunderbolt to further extend the sides lead.

Peter Coci scored twice and substitute Chris Georganis rounded out the scoreline and assured Athena a place in the semi-finals.

Fremantle City ran out 3-nil victors over Ashfield/Bunbury. It was a hard fought win for City who were held at bay until the 60th minute by a stubborn defence that was well marshalled by 'keeper Phil Jackson.

But there was nothing he could do to stop Michael Mirco stabbing the ball over the line in a goalmouth scramble 15 minutes into the second half.

The goal saw the action hot up for the final half hour and promising 17-year old Mark Lipman added his side's second in the 73rd minute before substitute Tim

Morgan wrapped up the tie two minutes later. "That's the third successive year we've reached the night series semis, but we've yet to win one - it's time we did," said City coach Stefan Kamasz post-match.

Inglewood United and Sorrento battled out a do-or-die clash with both sides in the running for progression to the semi-final stage - a draw would do it for United, while Sorrento needed a win.

United called up Robert Zabica for his first appearance in club colours this season and the former Soccerroo custodian proved to be the sides saviour early on with a series of fine saves to thwart the determined Sorrento forwards.

But the hero of the night was one-time Sorrento player Daniel Harrop who waited until the 62nd minute to score the only goal of the night.

A stinging Karl Atley shot was parried by Sorrento 'keeper Mike Harkness, Paul Lincoln collected the crumbs and knocked the ball to Harrop who had the simple task of putting the ball in the net and his side in the last four.

Despite both Cockburn City and Joondalup being out of contention for a finals berth, the sides put on a great match which produced a hard fought 2-all draw in the late fixture.

Floreat Athena will now face Fremantle City in one semi-final, with the other to be contested between traditional rivals Perth S.C. and Inglewood United. Both games will be played on Sunday night at Lits Stadium.

Read IS next week for a full report.

Gully express shows no sign of slowing

Port Melbourne Sharks 0

Green Gully Cavaliers 1

Becvinovski 70.

Friday night at Anderson Reserve,

Port Melbourne.

By Mark Fisher

Gully coach Ian Dobson demonstrated a tactical masterstroke on Friday night at Anderson Reserve, when he shifted striker Sasha Becvinovski into midfield instead of retaining him in his usual forward role.

The move proved decisive in yielding Green Gully an amazing seventh straight win from as many outings. It was during the 63rd minute, when the game was crying out for a deadlock-breaking goal, that

Becvinovski came on to take the place of fellow striker Ice Kutlesovski.

Barely four minutes later, Dobson made another vital substitution in order to position his left winger Jani Suric up forward with his number eleven Zlatko Donev; this effectively enabling Becvinovski to then retreat in behind the recomposed strike duet.

The Sharks defence, seemingly not expecting any surprises, continued as per usual to heavily mark the Cavaliers front two, and they clearly didn't count on Becvinovski playing any sort of drifting role.

This oversight culminated in the match-winning goal in the 70th minute, when Becvinovski charged ahead towards the left edge of the box, to collect a superb ball nodded on for him by Zdravko Atanasovski.

The defensive line for the Sharks was clearly caught napping as Becvinovski beat the off-side trap. The former Gippsland

player, in space and with a good view on goal, then shot deftly to the left of 'keeper Tony Lyras in order to register the match-winner.

Gully had been really letting the sparks fly during the last six weeks, and yet somehow looked to be undertaking a more workmanlike approach.

Both teams largely nullified each other during the first half, even though George Svigos did have an influence in Gully's slightly superior rate of possession. Sash Nicolic also looked threatening in patches for the home side.

Chances fell to Gully's Ice Kutlesovski (goal-bound header) and Zoran Markovski (low nod at the far post), as well as to the Sharks' John Paul Knezevic (acute angled shot) and Damon Collina (fired high from close range).

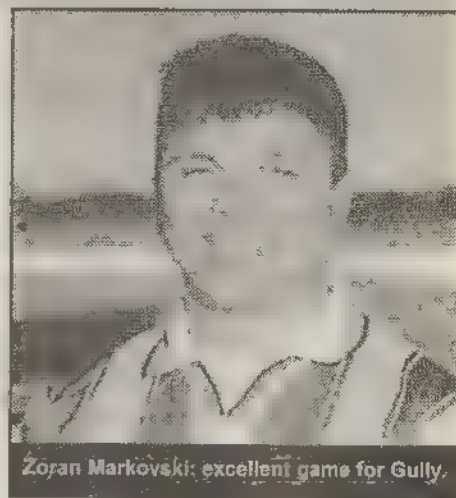
And yet these opportunities evaporated all the same, with Port Melbourne's inaccuracy and great goalkeeping by Tony Lyras keeping the contest level by half time.

Throughout the match, Markovski stood tall in what was mostly an even team display. He provided impetus to Gully's drive through the centre, which was becoming more evident during the second half.

Markovski also came close to adding his name to the score-sheet, when his dipping 20-metre free kick over the wall forced Lyras to pull out a gem of an outstretched save within two feet of the right post.

After Green Gully had taken the lead, Port Melbourne clearly retreated onto the back foot, with Knezevic prominent as he tried to shackle Gully's aggressors inside the last ten minutes.

The Green and Whites duly ran down the clock, and much to their delight referee Jim Ouliaris dispensed with continuing the match beyond regu-



Zoran Markovski: excellent game for Gully.

lation time. Port Melbourne's fans, as one could expect, were incensed by the decision to effectively end the match early.

Gully now have a bit of breathing space between them and the rest of the competition, and look equally as strong on the road as they do at home. They will next take on Fawkner at Green Gully Reserve on Sunday, whereas Port Melbourne will be away to strugglers the Melbourne Raiders, at the much-lauded Epping Soccer Stadium, on Monday.

PORT MELBOURNE: Lyras, Papadopoulos, Pir, Palamaras, Knezevic, Poutakidis, Pappas (Tsolakis 79"), Sonsini (Mustafa 74"), Tsaltas, Nicolic, Collina.

GREEN GULLY: Brian, Markovski, Mangos, Spiteri, Georgiadis, Atanasovski, Sevin, Svigos (Suric 67"), Neceski (Vassallo 51"), Kutlesovski (Becvinovski 63"), Donev.

Best Players:

3. MARKOVSKI (GREEN GULLY)

2. Atanasovski (Green Gully)

1. Lyras (Port Melbourne)

Yellows:

Nicolic (Sharks), Donev (Gully), Tsolakis (Sharks).

Referee: Jim Ouliaris

VPL RESULTS FIRST GRADE

PORT MELBOURNE SHARKS 0
PGREEN GULLY CAVALIERS 1
Becvinovski 70.

FAWKNER BLUES 0
OAKLEIGH CANNONS 2
Atagiozidis, Panaghis.

PRESTON LIONS 0
ALTONA MAGIC 1
Todorovski.

ALTONA EAST PHOENIX 0
ST ALBANS SAINTS 0

BENTLEIGH GREENS 2
Breslin, Markovski.
HEIDELBERG UNITED 0

PLAYED MONDAY NIGHT:

BULLEEN ZEBRAS v
MELBOURNE RAIDERS

RESERVES:

Port Melbourne 0 Green Gully 5

Fawkner Blues 0 Oakleigh Cans 1

Preston Lions 2 Altona Magic 4

Altona East 1 St Albans S'nts 3

Bentleigh Grns 2 Heidelberg Utd 1

PLAYED MONDAY NIGHT:

Bulleen Zebras Melbourne Raid

FIRST GRADE

GREEN GULLY CAVALIERS	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Bentleigh Greens	7	7	0	0	20	3	21
St Albans Saints	7	4	1	2	12	8	13
Altona East Phoenix	7	3	3	1	14	8	12
Altona Magic	7	3	2	2	6	7	11
Preston Lions	7	2	3	2	10	12	9
Fawkner Blues	7	2	2	3	9	10	8
Oakleigh Cannons	7	2	2	3	9	13	8
Port Melb Sharks	7	2	1	4	13	17	7
Heidelberg United	7	2	0	5	10	17	6
Bulleen Zebras	6	1	2	2	9	12	5
Melbourne Raiders	6	1	2	3	7	10	5

RESERVES

GREEN GULLY CAV	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Bentleigh Greens	7	5	1	1	26	6	16
Port Melbourne Sharks	7	5	0	2	24	8	15
St Albans Saints	7	4	2	1	16	12	14
Altona Magic	7	3	4	0	16	9	13
Altona East Phoenix	7	3	2	2	18	20	11
Fawkner Blues	7	2	2	3	9	14	8
Preston Lions	7	2	1	4	14	19	7
Heidelberg United	7	1	3	3	22	17	6
Melbourne Raiders	7	1	3	3	8	22	6
Oakleigh Cannons	6	1	2	3	12	18	5
Bulleen Zebras	7	1	2	4	5	20	5
	6	1	1	4	11	17	4



VICTORIAN PREMIER LEAGUE



eat well live well



ROUND EIGHT

Friday 24 March

Oakleigh Cannons v Preston Lions

Jack Edwards Reserve - 8.15 (First Grade)/6.15(Reserves)

Saturday 25 March

Altona Magic v Altona East Phoenix

Paisley Reserve - 8.00(First Grade)/6.00(Reserves)

Sunday 26 March

St Albans Saints v Bentleigh Greens - Churchill Reserve

3.00(First Grade)/1.00(Reserves)

Green Gully Cavaliers v Fawkner Blues - Green Gully Reserve

7.00 (First Grade)/5.00(Reserves)

Monday 27 March

Heidelberg United v Bulleen Zebras - Olympic Village

8.15(First Grade)/6.15(Reserves)

Melbourne Raiders v Port Melbourne Sharks - Epping SC

8.15(First Grade)/6.15(Reserves)

Mickey Blue Shoes!

Following in the footsteps of Australia's great keepers: Aidan Ormond meets Michael Turnbull

By Aidan Ormond

For an 18-year-old keeper, Marconi Stallions' Michael Turnbull has packed in plenty of footballing experiences in his short career. Trialling with top European sides Bayer Leverkusen and AS Roma, playing for Australia at Nigeria WYC '99, making his NSL debut with Marconi, playing at Viareggio in Italy and twice winning the NYL title with the AIS, where he attended for two years.

For Turnbull, his soccer life began as a sports mad kid in sunny Queensland. His first junior side was the Lorrakeets in suburban Brisbane. He was a striker when he began playing soccer 11 years ago as a sports mad seven-year-old.

"I was thrown into goals because someone was injured," Turnbull explained. "I made a few good saves and I liked it when the spectators applauded my goal-keeping work."

"I also liked the fact that I had a pair of gloves. No-one else had that type of equipment in the team!"

Turnbull's father joked that the young Turnbull gave the family's insurance "a good workout" given his like of climbing, kicking and hitting anything related to sports at the family home. "He loved to play," said Turnbull snr.

By the time the young keeper was 15-16 he was at the QAS and training with the Brisbane Strikers. He also had a season at Rochdale Rovers in the XXXX League (with current Cosmos striker Glenn Kolpak) before taking up his two-year scholarship with the AIS.

"At the AIS I decided to give it everything I had. It's up to you what you make of it there."

"You have the best training facilities in Australia - maybe even the world - so I decided to dedicate myself to becoming as good as I could be."

"It's easy to go off the track there but I was with a group that was pretty well-focused," he noted.

youth coach position.

Having played both youth and now senior soccer Turnbull can assess the differences in coaching the two stratas.

"You need a patient coach at youth level, while at senior level he expects you to be the finished product and, therefore, to get results immediately."

The first real look Australia had of Michael Turnbull was in the ill-fated Nigeria '99 Young Socceroos campaign.

Anthony Breaden was given the keeper's shirt for the first two pool games, but Turnbull had the gig for the last match against the Republic of Ireland after Australia had gone down 3-1 against Mexico in the second game (we won the first one against Saudi Arabia 3-1.)

It also gave the Queenslander his first close look at a player destined to be a huge star in Europe: Coventry's Robbie "Keano" Keane

been signed so I am not sure they were ready to sign another young keeper

"The facilities were superb. Thousands would just turn up to watch training. However I did not know anyone and basically was ignored while I was there."

Interestingly Leverkusen had German star Ulf Kirsten in their ranks. The striker has been linked to Perth Glory (due to his connection with coach Bernd Stange in WA). Turnbull found Kirsten to be "self absorbed ... he basically did not speak to me or any of the other players."

It must have seemed like a million miles away from the tranquillity of the wallabies and koalas from his upbringing in Brisbane.

Ironically the same club now has, as its regular first team keeper, former Young Socceroo and Melbourne Knights custodian 'Fabulous' Frank Juric

"The players over there are not going to help you out. You are there to take their wages, so they throw the ball harder at you and try to make life difficult for you."

"Over there you are the lowest of the low which makes it all the more pleasant when you come home."

"Having said that, I would not change anything about going to Germany ... it certainly makes you a stronger person when you come home."

Turnbull was again back trialling in Europe recently. Following on from the Viareggio youth tournament in Italy (in which Marconi's youth team had three narrow losses) Roma gave him a trial.

"It was pretty much the same as Germany but they maybe were a bit friendlier. I saw Montella and Totti there at Roma and they are huge stars."

Weekend press reports suggest that Roma was very happy with the young Aussie and an offer could be made before the end of the season.

Turnbull ended up at Marconi after coach Eddie Krncevic, a man who knows a thing or two about playing in Europe, called Turnbull and expressed an interest in the keeper. After he saved four out of five penalties in a friendly against Spirit in pre-season, Turnbull's destiny was Bossley Park.

"Eddie wanted me there the next week, but I could not get away from the AIS straight away because they needed to find a replacement keeper."

Turnbull is a full-timer with the club. "I'm on a good wicket there. I train during



"When I'm on the bench I am always prepared to be playing in the starting eleven, so coming into the side for the third game was not a problem from a preparation angle."

"Keane, and also Damien Duff, however were in a different class for the Republic of Ireland. These guys were quick, accurate. I mean they only had five or six shots and scored four. Perhaps that was what we lacked in our side"

Without wishing to make excuses, Turnbull did feel Australia was a bit unlucky at certain crucial times of the tournament.

He also defended the decision to take the squad to Holland prior to playing in the heat of Nigeria

"Sometimes you can be training in hot climates and be totally drained come tournament time, so yeah, I supported the decision to train in Holland," commented

"The players over there (at Euro clubs) are not going to help you out. You are there to take their wages, so they throw the ball harder at you and try to make life difficult for you."

Michael Turnbull on trialling o/s



The AIS won the NYL title two years running during his 24 month time there.

The side featured Joeys Jade North and Wayne Shroj, Glory's Ljubo Milicevic and the highly rated Ivan Ergic.

"Because we knew each other inside out no-one could beat us ... on our day we could win by any margin."

Turnbull also heaped praise on his coach at the AIS, Steve O'Connor. The Marconi keeper endorsed him as a quality candidate for the now vacant national



the day as well. It's my only job so I can fully focus."

And it helps when you have a coach that has, in Turnbull's words, "an aura."

"Eddie is in the know. He's so experienced. You know when you meet a person and that person has an aura? Well that's what Eddie's got."

"He's very approachable and is highly respected by the players. It's just great playing for Marconi ... I think it's the most professional club in Australia. Marconi is brilliant with awesome facilities."

And Turnbull is convinced, perhaps understandably, that his side will make the finals

"Don't get me wrong, but we have not yet peaked. We have not been at our best."

Outside of playing for Marconi Turnbull loves to "wet a line" down places like Cronulla with teammates Danny Invincible (another Queenslander) and his roommate Todd Brodie (Marconi youth.)

As for the opposite sex, Turnbull is steering clear of them for the moment. "There's plenty of time for that when I'm established," he said with a smile.

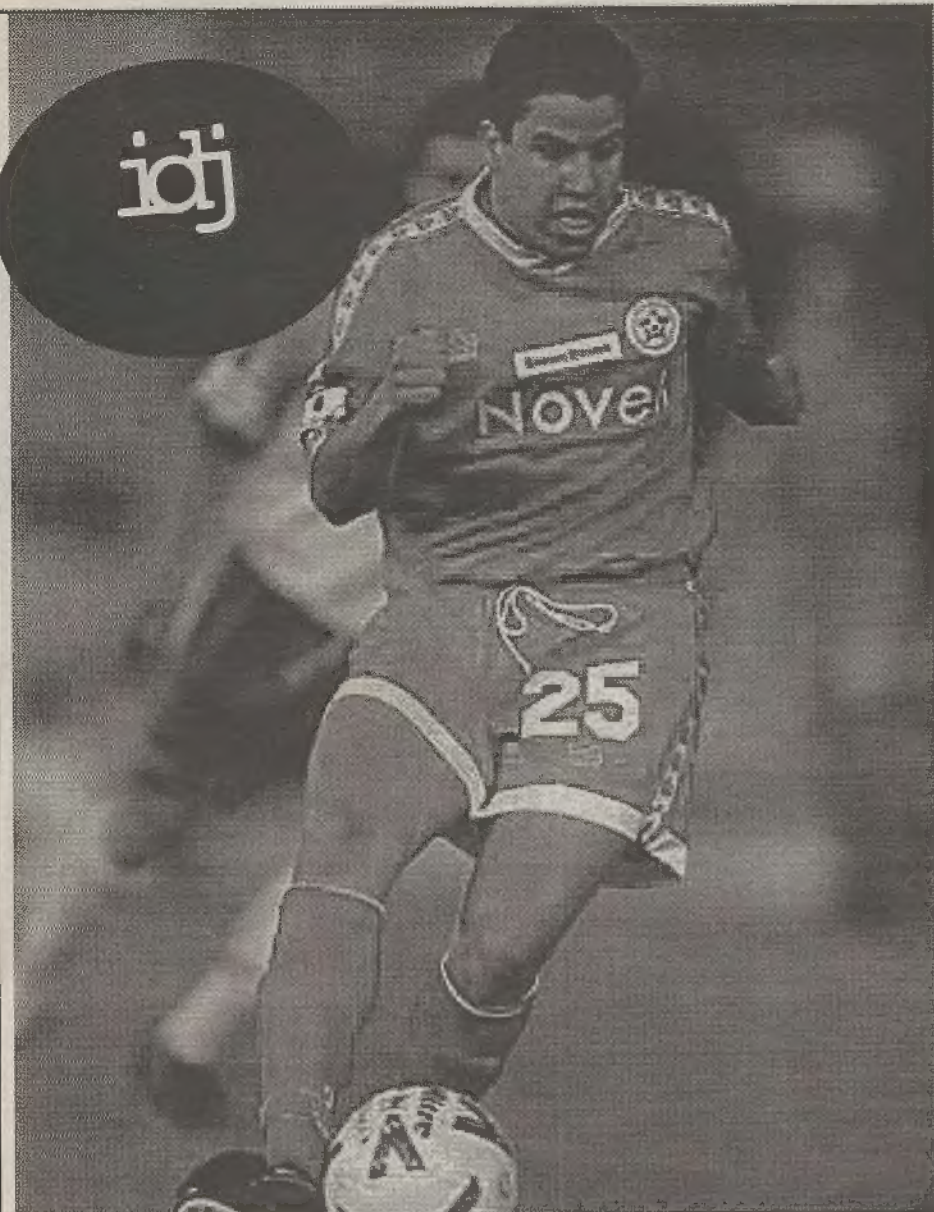
And the nickname 'Mickey Blue Shoes' was given to him by some of his Marconi teammates. Apparently there is a resemblance between Turnbull and Hugh Grant's character in the movie *Mickey Blue Eyes*.

In that movie Grant's character ended up with an Italian connection. Will that also happen to our Micky Blue Shoes?

idj

Ivo de Jesus

With Melissa melissa_muscat@bigpond.com



It was quite a weekend in the capital. Beating the NSL and Oceania Champions South Melbourne 4-2. One of the scorers for the Cosmos was their elegant striker/midfielder Ivo de Jesus.

Prior to the game Social Affairs Consultant Melissa Muscat discussed with Ivo team mate gossip, future ambitions and THAT name! Having a coffee at the same cafe was Ilija Prenzowski. She began with Ivo de Jesus.

Funniest team mate:

Danny Burt

Quote of the season:

"Go Superawe": Robbie Hooker and

Glen Kolpak have just invested in a new greyhound and the stupid dog is getting more attention than us.

Funniest thing you've witnessed all season at training:

Nick Mrja accidentally kicked the goal post and broke his toe.

Who has the most unusual occupation or hobby outside of soccer and what is it?

Robbie and Glen's greyhound. We're so sick of this dog. The other day Harry James and the dog raced, it ended up a photo finish.

Who has ever had the most head-turning hairstyle and what was it?

Harry James when he was at Newcastle. (Apparently we've published a few of the photos.)

Who has the most unusual article of clothing and what is it?

At last year's Cosmos night out, Nicholas Purdue turned up in this red ski suit with a blue skivvy underneath.

Which of your team mates is the most successful with the women? (Laughs.) No names!

Who is the most romantic Cosmos player?

Harry James and I would tie for that. What is the best excuse you've

heard this season for someone not training?

"We were at the gym." Harry James and Gabby Gonzalez.

Who's got the brains of the team? (Takes a while to answer then laughs.) We're struggling there. Pass.

Which Canberra Cosmos player can consume the most alcohol? (Answers immediately) Danny Burt.

He's an easy contender.

Have there been any outings where your team has got into any mischief? If so give details.

In Brisbane, but I wasn't there. Let's just say a couple of the boys are ready to

The other day Harry James and the greyhound raced. It ended up a photo finish!

take on Mike Tyson.

Who would be most likely to get their nose, tongue or eyebrow pierced? Nicholas Purdue.

Which of your team mates would we most likely see strutting his stuff on the catwalk?

Nick again, he's doing some modelling part time. (Next time your travelling along Parramatta Rd watch out for the guy on the Calvin Klein billboard wearing a red ski suit with a nose ring.)

Who would most likely wear a dress in public as part of a dare?

P.J Roberts without a doubt. He'll do anything for a laugh.

How are the promotions and marketing strategies going? We heard that you and a few other Cosmos players were contributing to promote the team. What did this involve and who were the other players? Do you think these promotions have been effective?

The other players involved were Harry James, Gabby Gonzalez and Nicholas Purdue. We went up to the committee and put our ideas forward and said this is what we want to do... Harry is now the development officer for Soccer Canberra. We visit schools, hold coaching clinics, registration days etc. This project has definitely been successful, especially with the schools.

We understand that you went to Portugal for a short time to better your soccer career. What was that like as an experience? Did you gain anything from it?

As a player I don't think I gained. The Benfica youth team was an experience, it was the first time I had played professional football. I came back for study reasons.

What I did learn was that there are a lot of players living and working in difficult conditions for the sake of playing overseas, earning less money than they would be playing in the national league.

It would have to be worth my while going back.

Before you headed down south to play with the Cosmos, you played for a few well known clubs in Sydney; Blacktown City and Sydney Olympic. We hear along the I.S. grapevine that you may have a renewed desire to play in Sydney. With the professionalism of the game increasing and the possible introduction of new teams such as the Southern Sharks, there may well be a market for you in the not too distant future. What is your view on this?

It would be ideal. I have friends and family there. The professional clubs such as Parramatta and Northern Spirit have a great set up. My parents also have a family business and when I come to Sydney, I sometimes miss training to help them out. Tommy Sermanni is very understanding and approachable about this.

I feel bad when the team doesn't perform for his sake, because he never yells or gets angry.

I'm sure this next issue has been the subject of many conversations. Does having 'Jesus' in your name give you any authority and power to do things that your team mates can't? Are you treated with upmost respect and seen as the club's ruler?

Not at all. At first it's a big issue but then it wears off. I've heard it all before. I've seen the title 'Jesus Saves Cosmos' in an article. I'm sure the papers have a field day.

Could you tell us a little bit about life outside of soccer? Your parents are still living in Sydney and we understand that the de Jesus household owns a family business.

We own a furniture business making sofas and sofa beds. They are located at Marrickville and Crows Nest. When dad was deciding what to call the business, he suggested Cosmos Sofas but I jokingly said, "Why not Spirit Sofas seeing as it is down the road from Spirit's home ground?" He replied with, "That's what we'll call it - Spirit Sofas."

That's why it's ideal. I could help my parents out and still play in Sydney.

In Canberra I spend a lot of time with my girlfriend. I have an accounting certifi-

cate and I'm looking for bigger and better things. I love Canberra but some of the professional clubs in this country have great stature.

Well thank you Ivo and good luck for your future plans, personally and professionally. Now, Ilija, how long have you been playing for the Cosmos?

Three seasons but I have just recently secured a first grade spot.

Is this your first NSL club?

Yes it is but before that I played for the AIS and the ACT academy. I have lived in Canberra all my life.

What have you learnt from playing national league soccer from coaches, team-mates etc?

The national league is more physical than the youth league. There is more work involved, more commitment, both on and off the park.

Do you have any words of advice for the younger players?

Always do your best and put in 100% effort. HARD WORK WILL PAY OFF, Melissa.

What are your future goals and ambitions?

Well obviously every player's dream is to play overseas, but for now I'm just concentrating on playing regularly in the NSL.

If you had a choice of playing in any league, which would it be and



Ilija Prenzowski: rated highly by de Jesus.

why?

Definitely the English league.

Thanks Ilija, Ivo tells me you're one to watch so good luck in your NSL career and all the best to the mighty Cosmos from Canberra.

Readers can contact me on melissa_muscat@bigpond.com

I want to build something that lasts, says Tanzey

By Aidan Ormond

It's interesting to note the differences in the roles of our two national team coaches. While Soccerroo supremo Frank Farina rarely gets to see his entire squad - a collection of highly paid European stars - Matildas coach Chris Tanzey is based at the AIS and training his squad on a daily basis.

Tanzey has control over the Olympic and World Cup squads - effectively the same team - as well as the national youth team. From that point of view his position - which has an element of the development coach to it - has significant advantages.

For Tanzey it certainly gives him a chance to usher through a new generation of young female stars and form a genuinely strong national program.

And that's exactly what he has been doing since he took over as national coach late last year.

"I think you've got to plan and build for a future," the former Liverpool player explained from his office at the AIS.

"Look it would be very easy for me to say, 'OK with the Olympics then a World Cup coming up, I'll pick mostly experienced players who don't need much coaching.'"

"Then if we battle away and don't do any good people would say 'well there you go.' I want to be in a position so the fans say that Tanzey set up a good program at the AIS that lasted and made us a strong footballing nation," he said in his thick

scouse accent despite living here for the past 20 years.

"I don't want to be here for 12 months then shoot off to another job. I want to create something that lasts and sets Australian Women's soccer up."

With the national program based at the AIS and funded by the Sports Commission, one hopes the beauracrat bean counters can share his long-term vision.

"The Olympics and the World Cup obviously is the main thing for the sport. To go on and win gold medals in the future you have to look long-term and plan for it now. Just look at how the US did it."

"Remember we've only been here for about 18 months so it's still early days for us."

"At the AIS we are going to give the girls great experience, so at the Olympics and next World Cup we are actually in with a genuine chance."

"I think deep down the Sports Commission people who control the funding are sports people themselves who understand that planning long-term is the way to go."

"And although everyone wants results, if I thought it was just about results we are not doing any worse going the way we are."

The decision on the hosting of the next Women's World Cup - following on from the phenomenal success of USA '99 - will be taken in May (at this stage).

"Yes it is exciting when you think that we could have a World Cup here then we will be ready to start Olympic qualifiers for 2004. The next four years can be a very productive time for Australian women's soccer."

"And we'll have the structure to put a World Cup on," added Tanzey.

Hindmarsh Stadium, SFS and Stadium Australia, Bruce in Canberra, the MCG and possibly Perth Glory's new all-seater gives us a great standing start to host.

Sadly though, our last World Cup effort fell well short of expectations. Hubris may have been the reason.

"It's all very well in hindsight, but I think," he sighed reflectively, "we were putting a band aid on as few things. Some players were carrying injuries ... I think because of the injuries they maybe weren't fit mentally."

Tanzey was assistant to Greg Brown at the World Cup USA '99.

"The run up to the Cup was not great. We did not win at the Algarve

Cup (won on the weekend by the USA over Norway), and won one out of four in the pre World Cup games."

"Perhaps at that point some seeds of doubt were sown, that maybe we were kidding ourselves. I think one of the mistakes we made was over confidence. It was like 'forget Ghana, we've already beaten Sweden 1-0, albeit in a very tight win, and maybe we could beat China.'"

"And I was thinking 'hang on, aren't we getting a bit ahead of ourselves?' Sure enough, things did not work out."

An unconvincing 1-1 draw with Ghana and losses to Sweden (3-1) and China (4-1) sent us packing from one of the year's biggest sporting events, eventually won by the star-studded US.

Unfortunately a pay dispute meant all the star US players, such as Brandi Chastain and Mia Hamm, did not play in the Australia Cup in January this year. The Americans still won the Cup, which indicates they will be hot favourites for the gold medal at the Olympics, whoever is in April Heinrichs' squad.

"We had a run there in the qualifiers but at the end of the day it means nothing if you can't do it on the big stage," a sentiment Soccerroo fans would heartily concur with.

"I want to win every game," noted Tanzey, "but it's more important to get as much out of every day from now to the Olympics. You don't get medals for winning these other games. You only get them for when it really matters."

"Think about what you are doing every day and don't think about the Olympics, which will be around before you know it, otherwise you are just psyching yourself out."

"It's the same in a game isn't it?" he asked. "Think about every minute you play on the park, not the final result."

Tanzey played for one of the greatest football clubs in the world: Liverpool. A club renowned for its footballing tradition.

"That's something we've - that is my assistant Ian Murray and I - have been brought up on. Sometimes the girls can't understand the passion we have for the game. We spend a lot of time talking about it."

"Once you've been over there a lot of people don't realise here what it means. (Was it Bill Shankly who said football was more important than life and death?)"

"I'd love to get the Matildas over there so they can see and feel how passionate people are about the game. We're trying to instill that feeling for the game



Matildas coach Chris Tanzey: putting in place the structure for future success.

into them

"Yes we want our standard of living to be as high as possible here in Australia, but I believe the harder and tougher the background you come from the more fight you have."

The Matildas have been involved in charity work to understand that, although they are doing it tough, there are less fortunate ones in society.

"We take it for granted when we have the facilities here at the AIS."

"We've only been here about 18 months. We have to do the graft now. Look at the USA's national team, and other sports like Hockey. When they started out it wasn't easy, but they've done the hard work and are now reaping the rewards."

Due to the cancellation of the Nigerian national team's three-match tour, the Matildas had a training camp in QLD last week. There are games in early June here in Australia for the Pacific Cup, which features eight teams, followed by a number of friendlies in August and September before the Olympics.

Tanzey will be hoping the rewards will come, and so will the demanding Australian public.

*More info on the Matildas can be found at www.matildas.org.au



Matilda Lisa Casagrande at World Cup '99 against China.

Continued from page seven

Munro admits to being disappointed with the contributions of some of his senior players during a turbulent couple of months, but is now confident the corner has been turned.

"The experienced players got us into this and I expect them to get us out of it," he said.

"Having said that, I still think that this group of players are good enough."

"I believe that I've got a team that will respond to finals football."

"The up side is that we have found a couple of promising young players and even though we've got a bit of experience back in the team I've told them all that they'll get the chance again."

Back in the top six they may be, but Carlton is still to beat a side inside the top bracket since cleaning out Marconi at their place last October.

According to flamboyant striker, Alex Moreira, Carlton will rectify that record at the business end of the season.

"Of course (we're good enough)," he declared.

"We have some great players, as good as any in Australia, so I still think it's going to be a great year."

"I'm certain we'll make the finals and go on to the championship."

Last Friday night's meek performance against the improving Power however proof that this prediction is still a long way off in many punters' minds.

Statistically the most successful striker in club history, Moreira stands by his early season declaration that he would score 25 goals this season, despite his form having suffered as Carlton has struggled its way into 2000.

"No problem," he says of his goal target.

"But whether I score 20 or 21 or 25

or whatever, I want more to win this championship."

"Carlton has given me everything and I am very happy here with this team."

"To play soccer in Australia has been a great opportunity for me and I am grateful to Carlton for that and I want to repay the club."

Like several of his teammates in recent times, Moreira has done his share of time on the bench.

For one recognised as one of the more emotional footballers going around in the NSL, it hasn't been easy watching on.

"I want to play, I want to score and I want to win - and I show it," he explained.

"I always want to play."

"But he (Munro) chooses the right players for the right matches and I respect his opinion."

"I mean, I want to play in every match but he is the coach and he is the

one who makes the decisions."

"I go three games without scoring a goal and I get very disappointed, but I know in myself that the goals will come and the wins will come as well."

Carlton's playing staff were bolstered by the news late last week that skipper, Andrew Marth, had commenced negotiations to renew his contract at the club for next season.

That the inspirational 300-plus game utility is likely to stay on is seen as a commitment by management to the long-term future of the club.

"The club has expressed that it wants me stay next year and I want to stay because I think it's a club with great potential," Marth was quoted as saying.

"All the speculation does affect the boys to an extent, so it's good to get the commitment direct from (club owner) Peter Jess."

NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE - ROUND TWENTY SEVEN

NEWCASTLE BREAKERS v CANBERRA COSMOS

1 Bob Catlin	1 David Millin
2 Shane Pryce	2 Toplica Popovich
3 Andrew Roberts	3 Danny Burt
4 Adam Sanderson	4 Nicholas Purdue
5 Todd McManus	5 Jason Polak
6 Glenn Sprod	6 David Winnie
7 Travis Dodd	7 Daniel Watkins
8 Mark Wilson	8 Alex Castro
9 Chris Tancheski	9 Michael Musitano
10 John Buonavoglia	10 David Arranz
11 Luke Tomich	11 Brian Hamilton
12 Robert Anglevski	12 Harry James
13 Brad Wleczorek	13 Glen Kolpak
14 Greg Owens	14 Ilija Prenzosi
15 Joshua Ferguson	15 Robbie Hooper
16 Vasko Trpcovski	16 Nikola Mrdja
17 Paul Wheeler	17 Geoff Howarth
18 Andrew Harper	18 Grant Barlow
19 Chad Mansley	21 Scott Conlon
20 Bradley Swancott	22 Elliot Zwangobani
21 Peter Juchniewicz	23 Andrew Clark
22 Glen Moore	24 PJ Roberts
23 Damien Smith	25 Ivo De Jesus
26	26 Gabriel Gonzalez
29	30 Angelo Konstantinou
30 Jason Kos	

Venue: Breakers Stadium - Saturday 25 February 2000 7.30PM
 Head to Head: Played 10 Breakers wins: 3 Cosmos wins: 3 Draws 4
 Last Week: Breakers 2-1 away loss to Force.
 Cosmos 4-2 home win over South Melbourne.

FOOTBALL KINGZ v ADELAIDE CITY FORCE

1 Michael Utting	1 Vilson Knezevic
2 Che Bunce	2 Atilio Hornjik
3 Riki Van Steeden	3 Ivan Zelic
4 Jon Lammers	4
5 Jonathon Perry	5 Alex Tobin
6 Marcus Stergiopoulos	6 Carlo Talladira
7 Wynton Rufer	7 Damian Mori
8 Chris Jackson	8 Carl Veart
9 Fred de Jong	9 Nick Sabljak
10 Jeff Campbell	10 Aurelio Vidmar
11 Robbie Middleby	11
12 Harry Ngata	12 Nathan Day
13 Levent Osman	13 John Fusco
14 Batrum Suri	14 Michael Cartwright
15 Ivan Vicolich	15 Louis Brain
16 Lee Jones	16 Matthew Kemp
17 Mark Elrick	17 Angelo Costanzo
18 Stuart Riddle	18 Bradley Hassell
19 Leigh Kenyon	19 Claudio Paez
20 Jason Batty	20
21 David Moya	21 Dong Ki Kim
22 Aaron Silva	22 Shane Thompson
23 Simon Eaddy	23 Jonathan Lihou
28 Aaron Lines	
32 Noah Hickey	

Venue: North Harbour Stadium - Friday 24 March 2000 7.30PM
 Head to Head: Played 2 Kingz wins: 1 Force wins: 1 Draws 0
 Last Week: Kingz 3-2 home win over Spirit.
 Force 2-1 home win over Breakers.

NORTHERN SPIRIT v GIPPSLAND FALCONS

2 Robert Enes	1 Bojo Jevdjovic
3 Matthew Langdon	2 Dean Fak
4 Matthew Bingley	3 Manny Gotis
5 Mark Rudan	4 Mehmed Durakovic
6 Luke Casserley	5 Jeff Hopkins
7 Robbie Slater	6 Brian MacNichol
8 Tony Perinich	7 Andy Vargas
9 David Seal	8 Clayton Bell
10 Nicola Bertl	9 Robbie Puca
11 Troy Cranney	10 Sandy Robertson
12 Simon Catanzaro	11 John Hutchinson
13 Philip Moss	12 Peter Kakos
14 Shane Lyons	13 Adrian Savage
15 Anthony Faria	14 Doug Marcina
17 Paul Bilokapic	15 Jonathon Buhuglar
18 Paul Wearne	16 Juan Nilo
20 Jess Van Stratten	18 Michael Katz
21 Michael Cunico	19 Igor Mandic
22 Paul Henderson	20 Simon Miotto
23 Adam Snyder	21 Ben Casar
24 Elvis Olic	
25 Ryan Griffiths	
26 Jack Sobczyk	
27 Adam Griffiths	
28 Abbas Saad	
29 Ian Crook	
30 Sean Cranney	
31 Michael Prentice	

Venue: North Sydney Oval - Friday 24 March 2000 7.30PM
 Head to Head: Played 3 Spirit wins: 1 Falcons wins: 1 Draws 1
 Last Week: Spirit 3-2 away loss to Kingz.
 Falcons 1-1 home draw with Wolves.

SOUTH MELBOURNE v BRISBANE STRIKERS

1 Milan Udvaracz	1 Clint Bolton
2 Steve Iosifidis	2 Glenn Gwynne
3 Fausto de Amicis	3 Shane Stefanutto
4 Nick Orlic	4 Andrew Davidson
5 Con Blatsis	5 Matthew Bell
6 David Clarkson	6 Brad Dutton
7 Steve Panopoulos	7 Shane Smeltz
8 Vaughan Coveny	8 David Pilic
9 Paul Trimboli	9 Paul Foster
10 Michael Curcija	10 Wayne Srhoj
11 John Anastasiadis	11 Chay News
12 Richie Alagich	12 Peter Dwyer
13 Adrian Cuzzupe	13 Stuart McClaren
14 Anthony Magnacca	14 Jade North
15 Goran Lozanovski	15 Mark Battistin
16 George Goutzoulis	16 Peter Grierson
17 Jim Tsakiris	17 Jeremy Harris
18 Robert Liparoti	18 Nick Meredith
19 Tasos Psonis	19 Wade Baldwin
20 Chris Jones	20 Daniel Duke
21 Rade Culbirk	21 Jon McKain
22 Mustafa Mustafa	
23 Chris Roche	
24 Andy Vlahos	

Venue: Bob Jane Stadium - Sunday 26 March 2000 5.00PM
 Head to Head: Played 18 Souths wins: 9 Strikers wins: 7 Draws 2
 Last week: Souths 4-2 away loss to Cosmos.
 Strikers 1-0 home win over United.

SYDNEY UNITED v PARRAMATTA POWER

1 John Crawley	1 Andrew Crews
2 Ray Younis	2 David Barrett
3 Mark Racker	3 Michael Santalab
4 Velimir Kupresak	4 Steve Eagleton
5 Eddie Bosnar	5 Richard Plesa
6 Vince Savocca	6 Joe Vrkic
7 Mirko Jurilj	7 Jacob Burns
8 Nahuel Arrarte	8 Walter Ardona
9 Mario Jermen	9 Mile Sterjovski
10 Ante Moric	10 Joel Griffiths
11 Tom Pondeljak	11 Steve Berry
12 Tom Maric	12 Stephen Laybutt
13 Matthew Zec	13 Milan Blagojevic
14 Kain Rastall	14 John Angelucci
15 Aytac Genc	15 Danny Townsend
16 Joe Moric	16 Mark Byrnes
17 Nick Bosevski	17 Danny Kukučka
18 Steve Bozinovski	18 Lachlan Campbell
19 Greg Saric	19 Matt Thompson
20 Steve Tollos	20 Barney Smith
21 Zvonko Uslebrka	21 Ahmad Elrich
22 Colin Luff	23 John Gibson
23 Terry Palapanis	28 Peter Bennett
24 Andy Rakic	29
25 Ante Deak	30 Mike Gibson
30 Brett Hughes	

Venue: Sydney United Sports Centre - Sunday 26 March 2000 4.00PM
 Head to Head: Played 2 United wins: 0 Power wins: 1 Draws 1
 Last week: United 1-0 away loss to Strikers.
 Power 2-0 home win over Carlton.

SYDNEY OLYMPIC v MELBOURNE KNIGHTS

1 Jim Kourtis	1 Joey Rayher
2 Scott Thomas	2 Ivan Jolic
3 Chris Zoricich	3 Ante Kovacevic
4 Peter Tskenis	4 Jason Vukadin
5 Scott Ballie	5 John Didulica
6 Ante Juric	6 Mark Silic
7 Zlatko Arambasic	7 Dragi Nastevski
8 Marcus Phillips	8 Ivan Kelic
9 Pablo Cardozo	9 Paul Urlovic
10 Brett Emerton	10 Mijo Trupkovic
11 Chris Kalantzis	11 Murtala Toyin Abbas
12 Sebastian Sinozic	12 Lance Plunkett
14 Gabriel Mendez	14 Paul Magdic
15 Lindsay Wilson	15 Ransford Banini
17 Paul Kohler	16 Alex Kriatzoglou
18 John Kyriazopoulos	18 Roddy Vargas
19 Nick Carle	19 Zlatko Maglic
20 George Bouhoutsois	20 Martin John
21 Les Miot	21 Zeljko Susa
22 Pete Zorbas	22 Steven Tillinger
23 Dylan Macallister	23 Michael Reda
24 Norman Tome	24 Hrvoje Matkovic
25 Hussein Jomaa	25 Adrian Cervinski
26 Adam Gantar	26 Marko Prskalo
27 John Perosh	30 Lupce Acevski
30 John Karoubas	

Venue: Belmore Sports Ground - Sunday 26 March 2000 6.30PM
 Head to Head: Played 32 Olympic wins: 12 Knights wins: 12 Draws 8
 Last week: Olympic 3-1 away loss to Stallions.
 Knights 1-0 home win over Glory.

FRIDAY 24 MARCH 10.30
C7 SPORT CHANNEL 12

**CARLTON V
PERTH GLORY**



- CARTLON**
- 1 Dean Anastasiadis
 - 2 Dave McPherson
 - 3 Craig Deans
 - 4 Simon Colosimo
 - 5 Sean Douglas
 - 6 Andrew Marth
 - 7 Stuart Slater
 - 8 Mark Atkinson
 - 9 Alex Moreira
 - 10 Lubo Lapsansky
 - 11 Archie Thompson (below)
 - 12 Mike Conroy
 - 13 Steve Martin
 - 14 John Markovski
 - 15 Con Anthopoulos
 - 16 David Terminello
 - 17 Joe Tricarico
 - 18 David Della Rocca
 - 19 Sordar Pir
 - 20 Adrian Cagalj
 - 21 Andrew Packer
 - 22 Angelo Motsiopoulos
 - 23 Colin Azzopardi
 - 24 Joshua Kennedy
 - 25 Steve Horvat
 - 26

- GLORY**
- 1 Tom Tomich
 - 2 Robert Trajkovski
 - 3 Jamie Harnwell
 - 4 Aurelio
 - 5 Vinko Buljbasic
 - 6 Gareth Naven
 - 7 Scott Miller
 - 8 Troy Halpin
 - 9 Alistair Edwards
 - 10 Bobby Despotoski
 - 11 Kasey Wehrman
 - 12 Peter Buljan
 - 13 Jamos Afkos
 - 14 Dion Valle
 - 15 Edgar Junior
 - 16
 - 17
 - 18 Hamilton Thorp
 - 19 John Carbone
 - 20 Tony Franken
 - 21 Ivan Ergic
 - 22 Ljubo Milicevic
 - 23 Jason Petkovic
 - 24 Aaron Cole
 - 25 Gary Faria

LIVE SUNDAY 26 MARCH 6.30
C7 SPORT CHANNEL 12

**WOLLONGONG WOLVES
v MARCONI STALLIONS**



- WOLVES**
- 1 Leslie Pogliacomi
 - 2 George Souris
 - 3 Alvin Ceccoli (below)
 - 4 Robert Stanton
 - 5 David Cervinksi
 - 6 Matthew Horsley
 - 7 Paul Reid
 - 8 Anthony Surjan
 - 9 Sasho Dimoski
 - 10 Stuart Young
 - 11 Scott Chipperfield
 - 12 Neil Harlock
 - 13 Noel Spencer
 - 14 Saso Petrovski
 - 15 David Huxley
 - 16 Peter Lahanas
 - 17 Esala Masi
 - 18 Chad Bishop
 - 19 Paul Dimech
 - 20 Daniel Berltrame
 - 21 Christian Zelvis

- STALLIONS**
- 1 Michael Turnbull
 - 2 Chad Gibson
 - 3 Mark Babic
 - 4
 - 5 Dominic Longo
 - 6 Pan-Keum Kim
 - 7 Christian Care
 - 8 Darren McDonald
 - 9 Zeljko Babic
 - 10 Brad Maloney
 - 11 Mike Smith
 - 12
 - 13 Danny Invincible
 - 14 Buddy Farah
 - 15 Pierluigi di Gia
 - 16
 - 17 Francis Awaritefe
 - 18 Harry Karl
 - 19 Brendan Renaud
 - 20 David Aceski
 - 21 Paolo Marchesini
 - 22 Kris Trajanovski
 - 23 Vlado Zoric
 - 24 Josala Junior Sauturaga
 - 25
 - 26 Daniel Severino



Venue: Olympic Park
Friday 24 March 7.30PM
Head-to-Head: 5
Carlton: 1
Glory: 3
Draws: 1
Last Week: Carlton 2-0 away loss to Power
 Glory 1-0 away loss to Knights



Venue: Brandon Park
Sunday 26 March 6.30PM
Head to Head: 49
Wolves: 18
Stallions: 28
Draws: 10
Last Week: Wolves 1-1 away draw with Falcons.
 Marconi 3-1 home win over Olympic.



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